

Marketing Communication Plan for the Finland Abroad Website

Pia Salin

14 October 2019

Author Pia Salin	
Degree programme International Business	
Thesis title Marketing Communication Plan for the Finland Abroad Website	Number of pages and appendix pages 50 + 47
<p>The focus of this bachelor's thesis is Finland Abroad. Finland Abroad is a new website administered by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, the commissioning party of this thesis. The main objective was to create a marketing communication plan for the Finland Abroad website. The purpose of the marketing communication plan is to provide new ideas for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in marketing the Finland Abroad website.</p> <p>The thesis includes a theoretical framework and a description of the methods used. The theoretical framework discusses three topics: the field of marketing and marketing communication, communication planning process, and communication in the context of government organisations. The methods used to create the marketing communication plan were a desktop study and a questionnaire. The desktop study was conducted to delineate all elements needed for the marketing communication plan. The questionnaire was designed to get more insight into communication channels and strategies. The questionnaire was distributed through the Facebook and Twitter accounts of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. The total number of respondents was 1095.</p> <p>The questionnaire results showed that social media, especially Facebook, is an important communication channel. The importance of social media was supported by literature. Moreover, since the target audience is broad, different types of communication channels and strategies should be considered in the marketing communication plan in order to effectively reach the target audiences.</p> <p>The outcome is a comprehensive marketing communication plan for the Finland Abroad website. The marketing communication plan includes two parts. Firstly, there is a marketing concept, a flexible plan for all marketing efforts of Finland Abroad. Secondly, there is a launch campaign plan, a scheduled plan for the launch phase of the Finland Abroad website.</p>	
Keywords Marketing communication plan, government communication, communication channels, marketing strategies	

Table of contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Background.....	1
1.2	Commissioning Party	2
1.3	Project Objective.....	3
1.4	Project Scope	4
1.5	Key Concepts	5
2	Marketing Communication Planning and the Context of Government Organisations	7
2.1	The Field of Marketing and Marketing Communication.....	7
2.2	Communication Planning Process.....	11
2.3	Communication in the Context of Government Organisations	17
2.4	Summary	19
3	Methodology	21
3.1	Desktop Study.....	22
3.1.1	Data Collection Process	22
3.1.2	Results.....	23
3.2	Questionnaire	30
3.2.1	Data Collection Process	30
3.2.2	Results.....	32
3.3	Limitations, Reliability and Validity	40
4	Discussion.....	42
4.1	Key Findings	42
4.2	Evaluation of the Outcome.....	44
4.3	Reflection on Learning	45
	References	47
	Appendices.....	51
	Appendix 1. Questionnaire	51
	Appendix 2. Questionnaire (English translation)	55
	Appendix 3. Sources of information when planning a trip abroad among selected age groups (N=590)	59
	Appendix 4. Correlation test for age and social media channels as a source when planning a trip abroad with cross tabulation and contingency coefficient (N=1044)	60
	Appendix 5. Sources of information when planning a trip abroad among selected education groups (N=846)	61
	Appendix 6. Correlation test for using discussion forums as a source of information when planning a trip abroad and different education groups with cross tabulation and contingency coefficient (N=986)	62

Appendix 7. Preferred communication channels for authorities among selected age groups (N=623)	63
Appendix 8. Preferred communication channels for authorities among selected genders (N=1013)	64
Appendix 9. Correlation test for choosing YouTube as a preferred channel for authorities among females and males with cross tabulation and contingency coefficient (N=1013)	65
Appendix 10. Content types and their means based on importance among respondents (N=1046)	66
Appendix 11. Content types and their means based on importance among selected groups based on travelling frequency (N=349)	67
Appendix 12. Marketing Communication Plan for the Finland Abroad Website	68

1 Introduction

Finland Abroad is a new website that includes information of all Finnish representation abroad. It is a website that can be useful to Finnish citizens when they are travelling or living abroad, containing information on practical issues and country-specific information. The website is administered by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, the commissioning party of this thesis. The objective of this thesis is to construct a comprehensive marketing communication plan for the Finland Abroad website.

The thesis presents a theoretical framework that lays the foundations to creating a marketing communication plan. In addition, the specific contents of the plan are based on the methodology used. The theoretical framework explores three topics: the field of marketing communication, communication planning process, and communication in the context of government organisations. These topics give the context to making a marketing communication plan. Methodology includes a desktop study and a questionnaire. The findings are used to decide on the contents of the marketing communication plan, such as strategies and tactics.

The outcome, the marketing communication plan, answers to the need of raising awareness among the target audiences and informing them about the Finland Abroad website and its purpose. This is achieved by the two parts included in the plan: a marketing concept and a launch campaign plan. The concept is a flexible plan for any marketing communication efforts related to Finland Abroad, while the launch plan is a scheduled plan for the launch phase of the website.

1.1 Background

Finland Abroad is a new website administered by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. Finland Abroad collects all information of Finland's representation abroad under one portal. (Suomi ulkomailla 2019a.) For example, an embassy in a certain country typically has a page within Finland Abroad that includes information on Finnish representation in the country, travelling and living, as well as information on services to companies. Pages can include information on what actions to take if one is faced with an emergency while travelling and how to obtain authoritative services. Moreover, news and other additional information related to the embassy's functions and to the country or mission in question can be found in the website. (Suomi ulkomailla 2019b.)

The Finland Abroad website aids Finns in need of authoritative services while abroad. For example, a Finn might need to contact authoritative services after losing a passport while travelling. In such case, they could search for the pages of an embassy in the country which they are travelling and find advice on how to proceed in order to apply for a new passport. If a Finn lives abroad, they can find information on how to for example notify the Finnish authorities about changes in their family, address, or the like. Finnish companies can find information on internationalisation services regarding different countries. (Suomi ulkomailla 2019b.)

The Finland Abroad website can be of use for non-Finns who are looking for information on coming to Finland. They can find information on Finland's representation in their countries, and their countries' representation in Finland. The website thus works in two ways, in Finnish and Swedish for Finns, and in English for other nationalities. (Finland Abroad 2019.) Although the website works for both Finns and non-Finns, this thesis only considers the context of Finns due to the objectives set and a limited scope.

As the Finland Abroad website is newly launched, a need to raise awareness among potential users arises. A marketing communication plan is needed to inform target audiences about the new website and its contents. Creating a marketing communication plan for the Finland Abroad website thus answers to the need of making the website and its contents known to Finnish audiences.

1.2 Commissioning Party

The history of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland dates back to the time before Finland's independence. Although before independence Finland did not have its own administration or ministry for external affairs, Finns were, in some cases, represented in the Russian Ministry for external affairs. (Ulkoministeriö 2018a; Ulkoministeriö 2018b.) Soon after Finland declared independence in 1917, in 1918 the first diplomats were named, and the first foreign affairs senator was appointed. Later, embassies were established, and more diplomats recruited. These measures carried importance in strengthening Finland's position as an independent nation. (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2018a; Ulkoministeriö 2018c.)

After over 100 years of independence, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is still the institution responsible for enhancing Finland's position in the international environment. The core idea is defined as follows:

“Finland’s foreign and security policy aims at strengthening the country’s international position, safeguarding Finland’s independence and territorial integrity, improving the security and wellbeing of people in Finland, and ensuring that Finnish society functions efficiently” (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2018b).

Thus, the operational landscape of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland is broad and has a lot of international and national significance.

Finland is represented around the world. There are 90 missions around the world, including consulates and embassies, as well as other types of representations, such as those in international organisations. In addition, there are about 400 honorary consulates. Finnish missions abroad involve matters such as foreign and trade policies, development cooperation, representation and diplomacy, as well as services for citizens. Services to citizens travelling or living abroad include for example guiding and assisting, as well as helping in practical matters such as passport-related issues. (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2018c.)

1.3 Project Objective

The main objective of this thesis is to construct a comprehensive marketing communication plan for the new website called Finland Abroad. The project tasks that need to be completed in order to successfully complete the project and to construct the marketing communication plan are the following:

- PT1. Writing the theoretical framework
- PT2. Conducting the desktop study
- PT3. Conducting the questionnaire
- PT4. Analysing and discussing the results
- PT5. Creating the marketing communication plan
- PT6. Evaluating the outcome and the process

The project tasks listed cover the entire thesis project from writing the theoretical framework to evaluating the outcome. The project begins by reading literature and writing the theoretical framework. Next, a desktop study is conducted in order to lay the foundations for the marketing communication plan. After conducting the desktop study, a questionnaire is designed and conducted. After conducting both the desktop study and the questionnaire, results are analysed. The marketing communication plan is then constructed using the results. Finally, the outcome and the process are evaluated.

1.4 Project Scope

The scope of the theoretical framework includes three topics: the field of marketing and marketing communication, communication planning process, and communication in the context of government organisations. These three topics aim to give the basic knowledge of each topic. They have been chosen to form the theoretical framework because they reflect the context of the thesis: constructing a marketing communication plan in the context of a government organisation. Through the understanding of the functions of marketing communication, planning it, and the context of government organisations, a good basis for creating a marketing communication plan for the Finland Abroad website can be achieved.

The research is conducted using two methods: a desktop study and a questionnaire. The desktop study includes theory-based research on all the elements that are included in the marketing communication plan. The questionnaire addresses two things specifically: channels and strategies. Analysing and implementing the results enables the creation of the marketing communication plan.

The marketing communication plan includes two separate plans: a marketing concept and a launch campaign. The marketing concept comprises the following elements: brand promise, target audiences, communication channels, strategies and tools, tactics and implementation, annual plan, and measurement. The launch campaign includes the launch campaign and schedule, budget, and measurement. The concept is a flexible plan that can be used whenever there is a need to market the Finland Abroad website. The importance of the launch campaign is that since the website is new, it should have a launch campaign to introduce it to the audiences. In addition to the two plans, introduction with a situation analysis in the beginning, and risks and concluding notes at the end are included in the marketing communication plan.

The marketing communication plan is a comprehensive plan considering different means of communication. Thus, it is not merely a social media marketing or a digital marketing plan. It is a coherent, comprehensive marketing communication plan that considers all parts of marketing communication efforts needed to market the Finland Abroad website. The channels, strategies and tactics include both digital and non-digital means of communication.

The project does not include planning, creating, or changing the content of the Finland Abroad website in any way. Furthermore, this project does not include creating any mar-

keting materials, such as visuals, or executing any marketing efforts. However, suggestions of marketing efforts are made. Although the website is useful for international audiences, the target audiences of the marketing communication plan only include the Finnish audience. This is because the objectives of the marketing communication plan focus on Finnish audiences.

1.5 Key Concepts

Marketing Communication refers to all the means and methods that organisations use in order to reach and communicate with their current and potential customers. It is the ways in which a company informs and persuades their customers and strives to establish their brand and presence in the market. Examples of these ways of communication are advertising, public relations, and social media marketing. (Cornelissen 2017, 286; Kotler & Keller 2016, 580, 582.)

Target Audience refers to a defined group of potential and current customers that a company has set as its target in marketing communication. In communication planning, defining the target audience is significant because the selected target audience impacts other communication decisions, such as what the suitable messages and channels are. (Cornelissen 2017, 296; Kotler & Keller 2016, 586-587.)

Communication channels are the different means and media through which an organisation communicates to and with their target audiences and customers. Examples of communication channels are, but not limited to: events, such as business and public events; mass media, including TV, radio, and press; advertising, including for example mass media and outdoor advertising; social media, including social networks and podcasts; corporate events, such as conferences and press conferences; and corporate media, such as prints, newsletters, magazines, blogs, and websites. (Kotler & Keller 2016, 32; Oltarzhevskyi 2019, 610, 617.)

Strategies are the general guidelines and methods that are defined to achieve certain objectives. They are usually expressed in relation to different organisational functions, for example operations or finance. (Cornelissen 2017, 6, 8.) In the context of this thesis, strategies refer to the different ways that marketing communication can be used, thus the strategies are tied to the marketing function.

Tactics are specific actions that need to be taken in order to achieve the strategies set (Cornelissen 2017, 196). In marketing planning, this area contains more specific guidelines than what strategies offer. It can for example specify the pricing and channels, and matters related to communication and marketing messages. (Kotler & Keller 2016, 78.)

Measurement in this thesis refers to the different ways of assessing the outcomes of marketing communication actions taken. These can include key performance indicators, metrics, and other measuring tools. (Dahl 2018, 202-204.)

2 Marketing Communication Planning and the Context of Government Organisations

Communication planning is a prerequisite for successful marketing communication. However, before constructing a communication plan, it is crucial to understand the function of marketing communication and what purposes it serves. This helps the planner to make good decisions when planning and helps to understand how to approach marketing communication. Moreover, the context in which marketing communication is planned, matters. For these reasons, the theoretical framework for this thesis consists of three parts: the field of marketing and marketing communication, communication planning process, and communication in the context of government organisations. These topics will give a context to and facilitate building a feasible marketing communication plan.

2.1 The Field of Marketing and Marketing Communication

In this chapter, the function of marketing communication is explored. Marketing communication overlaps with other disciplines in the field of marketing. Thus, definitions are given to distinguish between these disciplines. Since the marketing communication plan in this thesis is supposed to be a comprehensive plan, the concept of integrated marketing communication (IMC) is discussed. This is important because to create an integrated, seamless marketing communication plan, one must understand what integrated marketing communication means. Moreover, to understand the underlying reasons to creating a marketing communication plan, it is useful to understand the purposes, drivers, and benefits of marketing communication.

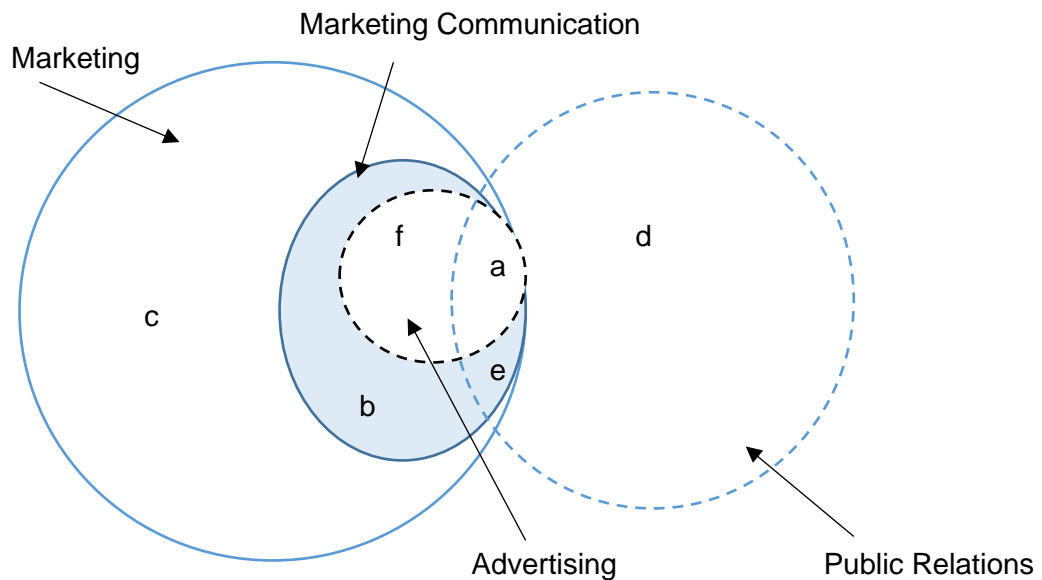
Marketing refers to the practices and processes that aim to meet the needs of customers, while aiming to create, communicate and deliver value. Kotler & Keller (2016) differentiate between social and managerial aspects of marketing: the social aspect involves co-creation where consumers and businesses exchange value, whereas the managerial aspect focuses on obtaining and maintaining customers by offering superior value. They also note that selling is not the most important part of marketing, rather the outcome or result of marketing efforts. Marketing is relevant not only for products and services, but also for events, experiences, persons, places, properties, organisations, information, and ideas. (Kotler & Keller 2016, 27-29.)

Marketing communication is a part of marketing. A common model in marketing is that of marketing mix, or 4P's, representing product, price, place, and promotion. Each element contributes to creating a marketing plan that will reach the marketing objectives. Product-

related decisions include for example design and quality, whereas price includes the actual price and any discounts and credit terms. Place refers to the choices on logistics and distribution. Promotion is the concept that refers to the communicative side of marketing: marketing communication to reach the target audiences. (Pelsmacker, Geuens & Bergh 2018, 2-3.) Although each P is relevant in marketing planning, promotion is the only element relevant for the scope of this thesis. Thus, it is important to understand that marketing communication is a piece of a larger entity in marketing.

Marketing Communication refers to all the means and methods that organisations use in order to reach and communicate with their customers and potential customers. It is the ways in which a company informs and persuades their customers and strives to establish their brand and presence in the market. (Cornelissen 2017, 286; Kotler & Keller 2016, 580.) Kotler & Keller (2016, 582) list the most common means of marketing communication, or marketing communication mix: advertising, sales promotion, events and experiences, public relations, online and social media marketing, mobile marketing, direct and database marketing, and personal selling.

Like any discipline, marketing and marketing communication have developed over the years. Before the 1980s, there was a clear distinction between marketing and public relations, both which were seen to serve different purposes and audiences. Nowadays, these practices are often seen as complementing and the integrated approach is favoured. (Cornelissen 2017, 18-23.) Nevertheless, there are overlaps between functions in the field of marketing and communication. Figure 1 clarifies the relationships between the disciplines of marketing and other related fields.



- a = corporate advertising
- b = direct marketing
- c = distribution and logistics
- d = corporate public relations (incl. investor relations)
- e = product publicity, branded content
- f = mass media advertising

Figure 1. The field of marketing communication and overlapping concepts (adapted from Pelsmacker et al. 2018, 10; Cornelissen 2017, 21)

In figure 1, advertising and marketing communications are both part of marketing, and public relations slightly overlaps with each three. In addition, the letters marked represent smaller areas in marketing and public relations, as listed above. The figure also shows that marketing communication is a part of marketing, and marketing is a larger concept than marketing communication. One can deduce that it is difficult to separate different marketing and communication activities. Thus, the current focus is on integrated communication.

The concept of integrated marketing communication (IMC) emerged already in the 1980s-1990s but is still the preferred approach. Pelsmacker et al. (2018) suggest that there are different stages in the development of IMC, which represent the different levels of integration of marketing communication within a company. For this reason, they cite different definitions for IMC. One definition that emphasises customer-centrism describes IMC as “a process for managing customer relationships that drive brand value”. On the highest level,

IMC is a strategic business process that is present in all company levels, and the communication efforts are based on research on the customers and adjusted accordingly. On the other hand, they give a definition for the communicative side of IMC: “a new way of looking at the whole - - to look at it the way the consumer sees it - as a flow of information from indistinguishable sources”. This implies that communication functions are no longer separate but are planned in an integrated manner. (Pelsmacker et al. 2018, 6-7.) Blakeman’s (2018) definition is in line with that of Pelsmacker et al. IMC or “relationship marketing” aims to create a long-term relationship between the seller and the customer by using alternative and relevant media and personalised messages instead of mass marketing. Successful IMC requires a company philosophy where communication is seen strategically. (Blakeman 2018, 4-7.) Thus, to create a comprehensive and cohesive marketing communication plan, the elements in the marketing communication plan should be considered as a part of a whole, not as separate marketing actions.

Marketing Communication has several purposes. One way of expressing the purpose of marketing communication is as follows: “always to carry over information about brands, instil brand value and positive brand evaluations in potential consumers, and activate consumers to react upon the brand, buy it, and become loyal to it”. (Pelsmacker et al. 2018, 110.) Kotler & Keller (2016) describe the role of marketing communications as a way to engage in a dialogue with customers and build relationships with them. There is an educational perspective to communication: teaching the customers how a product is used and motivating them to use the product. Moreover, customers can learn about the company itself through marketing communication. (Kotler & Keller 2016, 580.) This is the reason why the marketing communication plan for Finland abroad is made: for audiences to learn about its existence and purpose.

There are different reasons to communicate. Juholin (2017) outlines some drivers for communication: laws, ethics, and stakeholders. Laws can dictate certain requirements for communication: for example, freedom of speech and laws relating to the functions of authorities can be matters subject to legislation. On the other hand, ethical guidelines and codes are set to take a stand on what is right and what is wrong, or what is acceptable in communication. Stakeholders can demand information and transparency. Transparency refers to the right to request information, and the duty to give information. Although an organisation has the duty to give information, there can be arguments against giving information. These arguments can relate to for example negative consequences to stakeholders or a community, or issues of privacy. (Juholin 2017, 40-44.) In the case of Finland Abroad, laws, ethics and stakeholders are all important drivers to communication, because the context is that of a government organisation. Thus, it is useful to understand

that these drivers are present and to understand why marketing communication is needed.

Marketing communication offers several benefits. It can create brand awareness and positive feelings about a brand, remind people of the brand, and enhance consumer loyalty. These all contribute to brand equity and sales. (Kotler & Keller 2016, 583.) Juholin (2017, 47-50) notes that communication serves strategic purposes, such as leadership, daily communication, giving information, building organisational culture, maintaining shareholder relations, building image and reputation, societal influencing, and marketing. Thus, marketing communication is a strategic tool that can drive sales and thus contributes to overall performance of a company.

Wood (2017) points out benefits to planning marketing. It helps marketers analyse the internal and external situation and the competitors, find opportunities in the market and develop objectives. It can foster focus on the right customers, aid mapping the offering in relation to that of competitors and provide a plan on which to base resource allocation. (Wood 2017, 4.) Understanding the benefits that both marketing communication and its planning offer can guide the marketing communication planning process.

2.2 Communication Planning Process

It is important to understand the process of communication planning in order to be able to make a marketing communication plan. This chapter outlines the most common elements in a communication planning process and compares four frameworks. The four frameworks are those of Cornelissen (2017), Juholin (2017), Pelsmacker et al. (2018), and Wood (2017). There are slight differences in the order of similar steps between these four frameworks. Nevertheless, each framework roughly follows the following logic: first, the current situation is analysed. Secondly, the target groups and objectives are outlined. Thirdly, the implementation of said objectives is planned. Finally, ways to measure the performance are identified.

Table 1. Frameworks for communication planning (adapted from Cornelissen 2017, 122; Juholin 2017, 73; Pelsmacker et al. 2018, 127; Wood 2017, 7)

Cornelissen (2017)	Pelsmacker et al. (2018)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategic intent 2. Defining the communication objectives 3. Identifying and prioritising target audiences 4. Identifying themed messages 5. Developing message styles 6. Developing a media strategy 7. Preparing the budget 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Situation analysis 2. Target groups 3. Objectives 4. Budgets 5. Message and creative strategies 6. Tools, touchpoints 7. Evaluation 8. Control
Wood (2017)	Juholin (2017)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyse the current external and internal situation 2. Research and analyse markets and customers 3. Determine segmentation, targeting, and positioning 4. Set marketing plan objectives and direction 5. Plan marketing strategies, programmes, and support 6. Plan to measure progress and performance 7. Implement, control, and evaluate the plan 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Starting point for communication 2. Strategic objectives and measuring 3. Principles or values 4. Stakeholders 5. Different arenas of publicity and own media 6. Content and visual identity 7. Responsibilities and organisation 8. Resources

Table 1 summarises the four frameworks used as a basis for the discussion on communication planning process. All four frameworks are presented as lists, but it is noteworthy that they are processes. Moreover, communication planning is an iterative process where all parts affect each other. In other words, it is not a linear process, rather a continuous one.

The process starts by analysing the current situation. In situation analysis, both the internal and external environments of a company are evaluated. Internally, the products and brands should be assessed, as well as strengths and weaknesses. Externally, the market situation should be researched: market size, segments, and evolution of the market are examples. Macroenvironment can be analysed using the PEST -model, assessing the political, economic, social and technological factors in the macroenvironment. Additionally, the competitors and their strengths and weaknesses should be analysed. (Pelsmacker et al. 2018, 127-128.) In Wood's (2017) framework, the situation analysis is outlined similarly. The aim is to understand the current situation and find the strengths that the organisation has, and analyse the external environment using the PESTLE -model: legal and environmental dimensions added to the PEST-model. In addition, a SWOT analysis considering strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats combines the most relevant find-

ings from internal and external audits. (Wood 2017, 6-7, 29, 35.) In the marketing communication plan for Finland Abroad, the situation should be analysed. Both PESTLE and SWOT analyses are useful.

After situation analysis, objectives for the plan are defined. Juholin (2017) states that strategic communication objectives can often be derived from the organisation strategy. Objectives can be classified into different categories, for example intangible or tangible, financial or non-financial. Whichever objectives are chosen, the time frame for them should be realistic: certain objectives are short-term while others are long-term. A feasible timeframe can be of use when defining measurements later in the process. (Juholin 2017, 74-77.) Cornelissen's (2017) framework is in line with that of Juholin: it states that objectives should be expressed in measurable terms in order to allow for evaluation after the campaign, as clearly and as specifically as possible. Cornelissen refers to SMART objectives: they are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely. (Cornelissen 2017, 123-124.)

Wood's (2017) advice for setting objectives is in line with Juholin (2017) and Cornelissen (2017). To set the direction and objectives, one should refer to the overall strategy of the company as well as the mission statement. Objectives should support the organisational goals, the long-term aspirations. Based on the long-term objectives, marketing plan objectives are derived: for example, growth, maintenance, or reduction in different areas of business. (Wood 2017, 9-10, 91.) Pelsmacker et al. (2018) mention that certain types of objectives cannot stand alone: often to reach success in areas such as sales and profit, something needs to be changed in brand awareness and other brand-related objectives. This is because a purchasing decision, let alone brand loyalty, cannot usually be achieved without a longer process. (Pelsmacker et al. 2018, 148-149.) It is important to remember to state the objectives of the marketing communication plan because the objectives guide the entire process and are the reasons why the plan is created.

Identifying target audiences is an integral part in the communication planning process. According to Cornelissen (2017, 124), defining the target audiences is vital when advancing in the planning process because the choices in the plan depend on the chosen target audiences. Pelsmacker et al. (2018) note that audiences have different needs and characteristics, which is why a company could never please every consumer. Thus, they should find the relevant audiences to target. (Pelsmacker et al. 2018, 129.)

Pelsmacker et al. (2018) outline the segmenting-targeting-positioning (STP) process, which is used to define target groups. This process includes defining the criteria for segmentation, identifying segments, evaluating the segments and selecting the target groups, and finally defining the desired position in the mind of the targeted groups. (Pelsmacker et al. 2018, 129.) Wood (2017, 9) also outlines a similar process, mentioning segmenting, targeting, and positioning in her framework. Thus, defining the target audiences is based on segmentation.

There are different criteria that can be applied when conducting market segmentation. The process includes identifying separate groups that share common characteristics and are expected to react to marketing stimuli in a similar manner. The different segmentation criteria can be divided into objective or inferred segmentation variables. Furthermore, the variables can be divided into general or specific variables. (Pelsmacker et al. 2018, 130.) Table 2 summarises some segmentation variables that could be used as criteria for segmentation.

Table 2. Segmentation variables (adapted from Pelsmacker et al. 2018, 130)

	Objective	Inferred (psychographic)
General	Geographic Demographic (income, gender, age, education, profession, life cycle)	Social class Personality Lifestyle
Specific (behavioural)	Occasion Loyalty status User status Usage rate	Benefit Buyer readiness

In table 2, objective variables refer to things such as geographical or demographical status, things that can be easily measured. Inferred, or psychographic variables, refer to things such as social class or personality. This means that the meaning of inferred variables needs to be defined before segmentation. General factors refer to those that do not change according to behavioural circumstances, for example profession or age. Specific, or behavioural variables, can refer to user status or usage rate, things that change according to a product or service purchased. (Pelsmacker et al. 2018, 130.) When making the marketing communication plan for Finland Abroad, the criteria for identifying target audiences should be based on relevant segments.

There are different ways to present the strategies and the messages, the ways to deliver the message the organisation wants to send to its audiences. Cornelissen (2017) mentions identifying themed messages and developing message styles. Themed messages refer to the core messages the company wants to deliver. These core messages are realised by message styles, which should fit with the choice of the target audiences. (Cornelissen 2017, 124-125.) Wood (2017) refers to planning strategies, programmes, and support. This refers to the process of organising the marketing tools such as the 4P's, as well as planning on how to add value to customers. During this stage, product-related decisions are made: for example product mixes and lines, design, packaging and pricing are decided on. In addition, brand-related questions are addressed at this stage. (Wood 2017, 10, 110-119.)

Pelsmacker et al. (2018) mention the planning of strategies and tactics. Communication strategies, namely message strategies and creative strategies, as well as tools and touchpoints should be defined. The message strategy defines what is said to consumers: how are the characteristics and benefits of the product or service communicated to the customers. Unique selling position is often marketed in order to communicate the benefits to customers. Essentially, a creative strategy transforms the message strategy into a creative form. Finally, tools and touchpoints are defined, which determine how the message and creative strategies are put into action. (Pelsmacker et al. 2018, 127, 176, 184.)

Juholin's (2017) framework includes messages, content, and visuals. Messages, content and visual identity summarise the most essential things concerning the organisation. Stories and storytelling are examples of how an organisation can present their current situation and their goals to audiences. Visual identity aids differentiation and builds a coherent image of the company in communication. Concrete actions of the organisation or its management, for example charity work or taking part in societal discussions, can enhance the messages. (Juholin 2017, 82-87.)

Budgeting is an integral strategic decision when constructing a communication plan. It should be based on the objectives set and aided by past experience on communication budgets. There are several different budgeting methods that could be employed when constructing a budget. Whichever budgeting method is used, the budget should be evaluated and revised. It is not merely the internal communication objectives that have implications on the budget. Organisational characteristics, market size, market potential, economic situation and unexpected opportunities or threats, and other factors can influence

how communication budgets are constructed, and how they are adjusted. (Pelsmacker et al. 2018, 165, 175.)

At the end of the process, measurement and control are planned in order to understand the results of marketing actions taken. Cornelissen (2017) suggests a five-step cyclical process, integrated as a part of communication campaigns. The five steps are audit, objectives, planning and execution, measurement and evaluation, and results. Audit refers to using already existing data to understand potential issues and to set benchmarks. After audit, objectives are set. After objectives have been set, execution of the objectives is planned. Pre-testing may be relevant at this stage of planning and execution. Measurement and evaluation take place after this, although measurement and evaluation are ideally continuous in to ensure reacting quickly to matters that require attention. Finally, the results gained from the entire campaign are assessed. (Cornelissen 2017, 134-136.) Similarly, Pelsmacker et al. (2018, 550) state that a research plan should always be prepared along a communication plan in order to ensure a constructive campaign. When making a marketing communication plan, it is important to consider how to measure the performance of the plan.

Objectives can be of use when planning for measurement of results. Wood (2017) states that objectives are important in defining measurement and metrics should fit the programme implemented and match the purpose. For example, metrics related to long-term goals should be employed in order to track factors relevant to long-term goals. To plan measurement for the progress and performance involves making forecasts and schedules, as well as using different metrics to measure and analyse the results. When these are planned, the marketing plan can be implemented. The results are then controlled and evaluated, using the metrics planned earlier. (Wood 2017, 13-14, 241.) When building the marketing communication plan for Finland Abroad, the measurement could be used to assess whether the objectives have been achieved.

Cornelissen (2017) emphasises that communication practitioners can benefit from a flexible planning process. Flexibility allows for adapting to changes and restraints. It is often not possible to work on a communication plan in a strictly linear manner: rather, it is useful to see the planning as an iterative process where the earlier steps are revisited and possibly changed. Thus, a communication plan should be agile, allowing room for making use of unexpected opportunities. (Cornelissen 2017, 126.) Wood (2017, 6-7) also mentions that marketing plans are ideally dynamic and planning an ongoing practice. It is good to remember that while a marketing communication plan is completed, it should be revised in the future according to performance and other factors that affect it. Moreover, the inter-

connectedness between elements in the plan should be considered while making decisions.

2.3 Communication in the Context of Government Organisations

The sources used in marketing communication and communication planning process are mostly written from the perspective of private sector corporations. As the context of this thesis is a government organisation, it is essential to understand the difference that this context makes in planning marketing communication. This chapter explores the marketing and communication practices in the public sector and government and explores how the study and the trends in this area have developed. The context of Finnish public sector is also considered. These contextual matters are useful in understanding how the government context might affect marketing communication planning process, and thus helps in taking these differences into account when constructing the marketing communication plan.

The thought of marketing in the public and non-profit sectors started to emerge in 1969, when Kotler and Levy wrote about broadening the concept of marketing. Many publications exploring the subject were published in the following years, Kotler being one of the prominent authors concerning the marketing of non-profit organisations. They argued that not only things such as soap and toothpaste are marketed, but also political candidates, colleges and causes. However, marketing in the context of services, ideas, and people was not researched extensively. In the 1980s, marketing was used in the context of government agencies and societal issues, as well as countries, places, and education. (Andreasen & Kotler 2003, 7, 32.)

Despite the influence that marketing started to have on the public and non-profit sectors, there were doubts whether marketing would be appropriate in the public sector. Graham (1994) argued that marketing in the public sector has three main issues: the concept of marketing was misunderstood by the public sector, the product in the public sector is different in nature, and the specific customer is hard to identify. Although there were attempts to utilise marketing and explore its potential in the public sector, marketing was still seen as somewhat unethical and manipulative. Graham concluded that there was a need for more research of the concept of marketing and its uses in the public sector. (Graham 1994, 361, 373-374.)

As opposed to Graham's (1994) call for additional research, Butler and Collins (1995) argued that although the public sector is different, there is no need for developing separate

concepts. Rather, the existing models and concepts should be adapted for public sector marketing. They discussed the characteristics of the public sector: the structural and process characteristics, which have implications on marketing. Thus, they argued that the public sector should be considered as a context for marketing for marketing to be effective in the public sector. (Butler & Collins 1995, 83, 95.)

More recently, Kaplan & Haenlein (2009) argued that there is a “mutual misunderstanding” between marketing and public administration: marketing is easily seen as an expense for the public administration, whereas public administration implies bureaucracy and inefficiency for the marketing discipline. They suggest that this misunderstanding could explain why there is only little research on marketing in the public sector. They argue that although the public administration is gaining elements reminiscent of the private sector, the marketing in the public sector is different compared to that in private companies. They see two characteristics that carry the most significance: service-orientation and non-rivalrous nature of public services. In other words, a person's consumption of government services does not draw the service away from the consumption of another. (Kaplan & Haenlein 2009, 198-199.)

Liu and Horsley (2007) discuss the differences and similarities between the public and private sector communication, focusing on public relations. They suggest that since there are differences between the private and public sectors, there is a need for a public relations model specifically designed for the public sector. (Liu & Horsley 2007, 378.) However, according to Liu, Horsley and Levenshus (2010), after testing some attributes identified by Liu & Horsley (2007), there are no significant differences in the daily activities between communication practitioners in corporate and government organisations. Both groups seem to work on similar communication tasks. Some differences were found, for example budgets were often smaller in the public sector. (Liu et al. 2010, 189, 205-206.)

Marketing communication has changed due to emergence of social media, and the public sector is no exception. According to Graham (2014), social media is perceived as a beneficial tool for local governments and their communication. Social media allows for interactive and open communication with citizens, fostering transparency and democracy. The vast number of people utilising social media supports the thought that governments should be present and communicate in social media. Although the lack of resources can present a barrier to government's social media communication, social media is a useful and a flexible platform for publishing informative articles that citizens can benefit from. (Graham 2014, 372.)

The informative approach discussed by Graham (2014) is supported by DePaula, Dincelli & Harrison (2017). They found that the informative aspect is largely present in the social media communication of government organisations. Informative posts about government functions, policies and events accounted for the majority of Facebook posts made by local US government bodies. In addition to sharing information and other possible uses, there is another benefit of social media for government organisations: it is easier for them to control their own public image. (DePaula et al. 2017, 104-105.)

Considering the Finnish context, laws regulate government communication. Moreover, guidelines have been set to aid communication practitioners to communicate efficiently. The Prime Minister's Office has published a set of guidelines "Together, Boldly and Openly – Central Government Communications Guidelines". The guidelines outline the principles and values, such as openness and reliability, and list the laws that govern communication of the government. In the guidelines, the significance of social media in interactive communication is mentioned and its use encouraged. The role of rapid digitalisation and its impact on communication is emphasised. (Prime Minister's Office Publications 2016, 6, 12, 14.) Thus, digitalisation and social media are both seen as important communication tools for the government in Finland.

2.4 Summary

Marketing communication is a beneficial function that helps organisations reach and attract their target audiences. Marketing communication overlaps with several other marketing-related disciplines, which is why it is hard to separate each function. Integrated marketing communication is preferred because it enhances coherence in communication efforts. Understanding the purposes of marketing communication lays the foundations for the communication planning process.

Communication planning is an iterative process where all elements are connected and affect each other. Regardless of the organisation, communication planning process often follows similar logic. The situation is analysed, objectives are set, audiences identified, means of delivering messages defined, and ways of measurement decided upon. This framework offers a structure to creating a marketing communication plan for the Finland Abroad website.

In the past, the suitability of marketing in the public sector was questioned. In the modern world, even government communicators utilise social media and digitalisation as their tools. These digital tools have become important channels of communication, thanks to

the large audience reached through them. In Finland, social media is seen as an important tool to inform and communicate with citizens. Most of the articles cited regarding the topic are written in the context of the US, which raises a question of validity for this thesis. Many of them are also quite old. However, these studies show how marketing communication has been regarded in a very different fashion between public and private sectors, and how this traditional view has been partially replaced by the changing communication environment. Understanding the nature and the context of marketing in the public sector is useful when evaluating suitable strategies and tactics for the Finland Abroad website.

This theoretical framework offers a basis for creating a marketing communication plan in the context of a government organisation. The theoretical framework does not include theory related to specific contents chosen for the marketing communication plan. The next chapter discusses the methods that were used in order to make decisions on the specific contents of the marketing communication plan.

3 Methodology

This chapter presents the project methods and how they contribute to the project objective. The project objective is to create a marketing communication plan for the new website called Finland Abroad, administered by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. The methods chosen to implement this thesis were a desktop study and a questionnaire. The desktop study is based on marketing literature. The questionnaire directly asks the opinions of potential website users, a useful insight when attempting to reach the target audiences efficiently. Thus, the methods make use of both secondary and primary data.

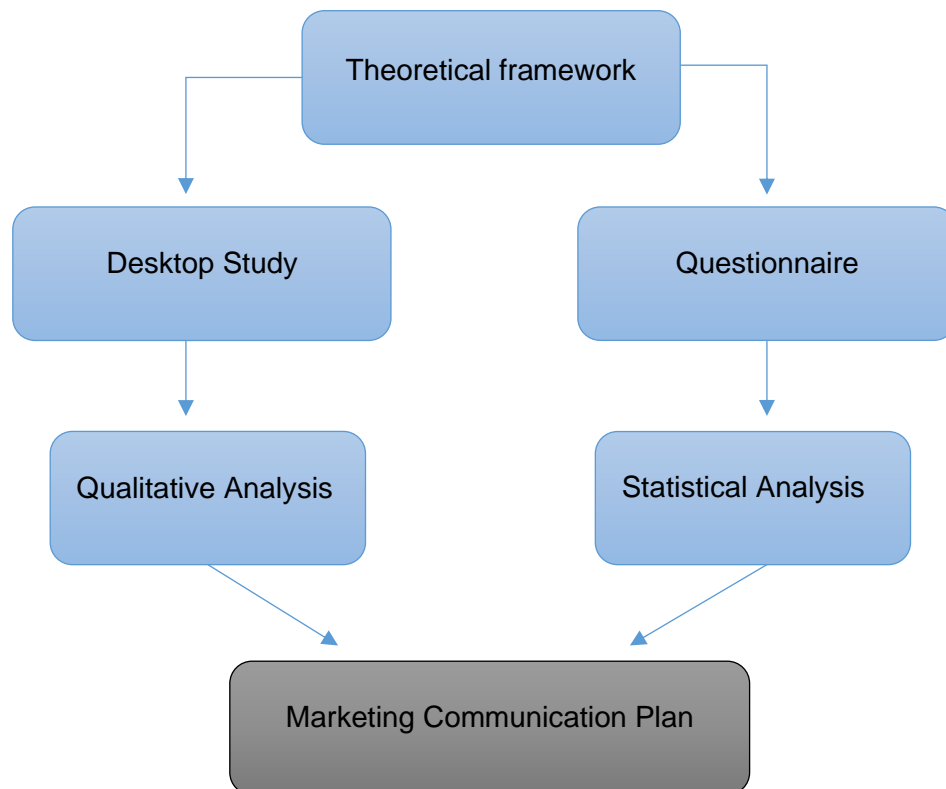


Figure 2. Thesis process and methods

Figure 2 illustrates the thesis process and methods. The process started by writing the theoretical framework. After that, both desktop study and questionnaire were conducted. Both qualitative and quantitative analyses were used. The outcome is the marketing communication plan, the objective of this thesis.

3.1 Desktop Study

Desktop study was chosen as a method in order to benefit from existing sources. The use of existing sources is justified because there is a substantial amount of literature available on marketing communication and communication planning elements. Thus, it was possible to research the topic and choose the most suitable elements based on literature. Furthermore, certain elements, such as the situation analysis and budget allocation, required an approach where various existing sources were studied. In addition, since the marketing communication plan aims to be a comprehensive plan, various elements were needed to research on. Desktop study allows for broad research, which is why it is an effective method to use in this thesis project.

3.1.1 Data Collection Process

The process began by discussing the Finland Abroad website with the commissioning party. The purpose and contents of the website were discussed. The contents and structure of the marketing communication plan were briefly discussed and planned beforehand. The author received information concerning the Finland Abroad website to understand the context better.

The structure and elements were chosen in order to understand what data needs to be collected. The structure and elements of the marketing communication plan reflect the theoretical framework, especially the part of communication planning process. Moreover, needs of the commissioning party were considered when forming the framework for the marketing communication plan. Since there was a need for a flexible plan, and a more focused plan to start the marketing efforts, two separate parts were made. The first part is the marketing concept, a general plan to market Finland Abroad. The second part is the launch campaign plan, meant to start the marketing of Finland Abroad.

Data was collected using both literature and internet sources. Literature included various titles on marketing communication. Internet sources were utilised in looking for more specific information, for example statistics or information on certain events. Data was collected and analysed during the process of building the marketing communication plan.

Data was analysed based on the suitability for the context. Channels, strategies, and tactics were assessed based on suitability for the marketing of Finland Abroad, as well as

their potential to reach the target audiences while maintaining the reliable image of Finland Abroad and the Ministry. Moreover, compatibility of the elements was held as a criterion in order to construct a cohesive, integrated marketing communication plan.

3.1.2 Results

Planning the elements in the marketing concept were conducted in steps, yet continuously revising the previous and next stages. This is based on the theoretical framework discussed in chapter 2.2. The implementation of the plan is presented in a similar order to that which the elements appear in the actual communication plan. The elements of the marketing concept are presented first, after which the launch plan and its implementation are discussed.

Situation analysis

The situation analysis was conducted to understand the environment and potential factors that could affect the marketing choices. The situation analysis was carried out by using PESTLE and SWOT analyses, in addition to internal analysis. Internal analysis was carried out by focusing on the matters relevant to the context of Finland Abroad without any specific framework. The use of PESTLE and SWOT analyses was adopted from the theory, as these frameworks were mentioned in chapter 2.2. Information for the analyses were gathered by searching reliable and relevant internet sources, such as Statistics Finland and the website of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Brand Promise

According to Karanges et al. (2018, 235), a brand promise “encapsulates the functional and emotional values, qualities, and experiences, associated with the tangible goods and intangible services offered by the brand”. Keeping this in mind, the brand promise for Finland abroad was defined as follows:

“To be a reliable, up-to-date, and interesting platform for travellers, expatriates, and companies, who are looking for information on authoritative services to Finns abroad. Finland Abroad helps users prepare for travelling and for being informed about Finland’s representation abroad. Finland Abroad combines all the information and materials produced by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and the missions under one platform. “

The brand promise defined summarises the main idea of Finland Abroad, including what types of information can be found in the website. Moreover, it addresses who the target audiences are, so that it is clear what kind of situations the website is useful for. The brand promise can guide the branding strategy, which is discussed in strategies and tactics part.

Target Audiences

Target audiences were derived from the objectives. Since the objective was to reach Finns in certain situations, target audiences were chosen based on behavioural rather than general factors. This is based on the observation that different segmentation variables can be used when segmenting target audiences in the theoretical framework in chapter 2.2. The following distinct target audiences were defined: travellers, planners, expatriates, companies, and employees of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the missions. The target audiences were further divided into internal and external, internal referring to employees and external to travellers, planners, expatriates, and companies. This division was made because the channels to reach internal and external audiences differ substantially.

Communication channels

Communication channels were defined separately for both internal and external target audiences due to the different nature of the channels. Communication channels to reach internal audiences were defined based on information on available internal channels given by the commissioning party. Information was also given regarding existing channels available to reach external channels. The channels chosen include websites and blogs administered by the Ministry and magazines and social media channels of the Ministry and the missions. These channels were chosen because they are easily available, cost-effective, and can thus be employed whenever there is a need to market Finland Abroad.

The internal channels include intranet, notice boards, and internal events. The external channels were divided into four groups: websites, Ministry's magazines, social media, and blogs. Websites include the Ministry's and the missions' websites. These were chosen because they are closely related to the purpose of Finland Abroad. There are also travel-related websites that are administered by the Ministry. These were a relevant choice for communication channels because Finland Abroad is a useful source of information for

travellers. The two magazines included are both published by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. These magazines were chosen as channels because they are easy to access and include topics that are related to Finland Abroad.

Different social media platforms chosen reflect the different possibilities and tactics of each platform. Facebook is widely used among consumers, making it a great platform for any organisation to communicate with their audiences. Twitter is beneficial for participating in current, fast-moving and real-time discussions. Moreover, hashtags in Twitter can be used to specify topics and to encourage followers to utilise the hashtags related to a company brand, for example. Instagram is a platform for photos and videos, thus the best tool for building visual identity. YouTube is for creating and sharing videos, which can be shared through other social media channels. (Fenton, Mohamad & Jones 2017, 199-201, 203.) Including various platforms thus enables varied and interesting marketing communication, reaching the target audiences effectively.

Strategies and tactics

Strategies and tactics were chosen based on their suitability for the government context, as well as their potential in reaching the target audiences. Furthermore, various strategies were chosen in order to attract multiple audiences and to form a cohesive, integrated plan in which the strategies support each other. The strategies chosen were the following: PR, advertising, social media marketing, content marketing, SEO, branding, and collaborative marketing. Tactics were designed after the strategies had been chosen. The tactics were created to show how the strategies could be put into action.

Public Relations was chosen as a strategy because its role is to establish and maintain goodwill between the organisation and the public, as defined by Cornelissen (2017, 292) and Pelsmacker et al. (2018, 4). According to Blakeman (2018), public relations is suitable for situations such as launching and positioning a new service, reaching target audiences, and developing and managing the image of a service. Moreover, PR is potentially free, thanks to newspaper articles or other kind of media exposure. (Blakeman 2018, 131, 137.) Although news articles written by journalists and other such media is cannot be fully controlled, PR is a relevant strategy in managing the image of Finland Abroad.

Advertising complements other strategies in the communication plan for Finland Abroad because it allows for a wide distribution of a controlled, repeated message. Although advertising requires resources, it does not always require a large budget. The company has the control over the content and is able to express the brand through different means,

such as colours. (Kotler & Keller 2016, 596.) Repetition is justified when launching a new website, and during relevant time periods, for example during travel seasons when target audiences are more likely to need the website.

Social media marketing was chosen as a strategy because of its many benefits. It is one of the most used way of interacting with and engaging customers online (Fenton et al. 2017, 190, 212). Social media is compatible with the IMC approach: in addition to being engaging and interactive, it is customer-centric and easy to integrate with other strategies. Moreover, it is a diverse strategy thanks to the numerous platforms that exist. (Blakeman 2018, 269, 279.) As discussed earlier in the theoretical framework, for example Graham (2014) views social media as a useful tool for the public sector. Moreover, as the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland already employs several social media channels, it is a relevant strategy in this context.

Although content marketing can be used for entertainment, informing and increasing awareness are purposes fit for employing content marketing. Content marketing entails several types of content: blog posts, infographics, photos, videos, and competitions, for example. Content marketing relates to other strategies because it can enhance branding and SEO. Moreover, social media marketing and content marketing complement each other because content can be easily distributed in different social media channels to engage users. (Iredale, Heinze & Williams 2017, 214, 224-227, 230.) Because content marketing is about creating interesting and relevant content, it is a suitable strategy for marketing Finland Abroad. Content relating to topics such as travelling, living abroad and Finnish representation abroad are suitable topics regarding the context of Finland Abroad.

SEO was selected as one of the strategies because it can enhance website visibility. SEO refers to Search Engine Optimisation, the practice of aiming to increase traffic of a website that comes from search engines. Appearing in search engine results after relevant search words helps potential users find the website. Making high-quality content, or content that is relevant, unique, and engaging, is important for successful SEO. Other tactics to succeed in SEO are using links and relevant keywords in the website, both single and long tail keywords. (Heinze 2017, 161, 176-177; Wilson 2016, 6-11.) These tactics were included to enhance successful SEO in marketing Finland Abroad.

Branding is a relevant strategy for Finland Abroad because it helps the users identify with and to remember the website. Branding can build brand equity, the added value that customers get by engaging with the brand. The value, a brand promise is manifested through every interaction with the brand. For this reason, the brand promise should be delivered in

each interaction, in a consistent manner. The promise and execution should thus be aligned, achieved by consistent communication efforts. (Cruz & Karatzas 2017, 139-141, 143.) Establishing the Finland Abroad website as a trustworthy website and delivering the brand promise set can be achieved through branding and consistent communication, which is why branding is a useful strategy.

Collaboration with other websites and companies could benefit Finland Abroad by increasing visibility. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has collaborated earlier in their website regarding travelling safety (Matkustusturvallisuus 2019). Moreover, according to Pelsmacker et al. (2018, 294), in addition to being an important source of knowledge for consumers, a collaborative campaign can yield better results compared to solely organised campaigns. For these reasons, Finland Abroad could benefit from a collaborative campaign. Different travelling websites and blogs were chosen as potential collaborators because travel-related media tends to attract those interested in travelling, thus reaching the target audiences of Finland Abroad.

Annual plan

The annual plan was constructed by searching for relevant periods, dates and events in the internet. For example, major fairs were searched in the website of *Messukeskus*, one of the major venues for expositions and trade shows in Finland (Messukeskus 2019). Relevant dates were searched for using the annual calendar. Moreover, travelling periods were added based on holidays in the calendar, such as Easter and Christmas times (Yliopiston almanakkatoimisto 2019). Travelling statistics from Statistics Finland were also used.

Measurement

Ways of measurement were chosen largely based on the fact that the marketing communication plan is constructed for a website. The following measurements were chosen: website speed, traffic, engagement, demographics and SEO. Website speed is important because it affects user experience. Traffic refers to the number of people visiting the webpage, thus a key metric when measuring the success and visibility of a newly launched website. Engagement is relevant because it can measure how active the website users are and whether they are consuming the content in the website. Demographics can be useful in giving insight of the location of the visitor, which can help the marketer to understand the user profile better. Moreover, search appearance is an important SEO metric to measure how the website performs in search engines. (Wilson 2016, 147-150.)

Since different social media channels were chosen as communication channels, monitoring social media was included. Social listening is monitoring social media and how the brand is mentioned, and how keywords and topics related are mentioned in discussions (Amaresan 2018). This is useful in understanding how the users view the Finland Abroad website. Another way to understand the user opinions is to ask the visitors for feedback in a form of a questionnaire in the website (Pelsmacker et al. 2018, 536). This measurement can yield useful user insight, especially since the website is new.

The launch campaign

The launch campaign plan was made after the marketing concept. This is because the launch campaign is intended to start the marketing efforts as well as support the marketing concept. The following elements were included in the launch plan: the launch campaign plan, budget allocation, and measurement.

The launch campaign plan was visualised as a table. It is reminiscent of a “content calendar”, which, according to Kim (2016, 122-123), are useful in laying out the holistic view of a campaign, showing the time, platform, content and posts used, among other key components. The components, as shown in the columns, chosen for the launch campaign for Finland Abroad are the following: time, strategy, tactic, channels, and owned/earned/paid.

The first column in the launch campaign plan table is time. Time frame was set to three weeks. This length was chosen because it is long enough to utilise different tactics and to use the budget effectively. There were no specific dates given, the columns only specified week 1, week 2, or week 3. This is because the exact time of beginning of marketing efforts was unknown at the time of making the plan. However, the table gives an order of the marketing actions, and thus will be convenient for the user without a more specific timeline.

Strategies chosen for the launch campaign were the following: internal communication, PR, social media, paid social media, own media, and paid media and advertising. Internal communication refers to information sent to employees about the new website and the campaign. PR was chosen because press releases are relevant when launching a new website. Social media was chosen because it is also an important component in the marketing concept, thus the use of social media should be started during the campaign. Own media refers to advertisements or articles in the Ministry’s own magazines.

Paid social media and paid media and advertising are both more prominent in the launch campaign strategy than in the marketing concept. This is because there was a budget available for the launch phase. Moreover, the launch phase should be as visible as possible, which can be enhanced by using bought advertising. This is why the column owned/earned/paid was included: to have a breakdown of the media distribution between owned, earned and paid media.

The use of media can be planned by using the “POE” framework, referring to paid, owned, and earned media. Paid media refers to all advertising that is paid for, for example an advertisement in a social media platform. Owned media refers to channels that the organisation can control, for example company website. Earned media is media exposure and publicity that has been initiated by the organisation. (Kelley, Jugenheimer & Sheehan 2015, 10-11.) Since the launch campaign uses paid media more than the marketing concept, it is useful to classify each marketing action or tactic. The launch campaign for Finland Abroad comprises mainly of owned and paid media, because it is a mix between starting to communicate in owned channels and enhancing the launch campaign visibility by using paid media.

The channels in the launch campaign are mostly the same than what the marketing concept uses. The increased use of paid marketing is shown in the choice of the communication channels. Travel magazines, travel blogs, travel websites, social media channels and screens in metros and trams are the channels that paid marketing and advertising were chosen to leverage paid marketing.

The budget was allocated in the limits of the budget defined by the commissioning party. It was planned simultaneously with the strategies and tactics, because the two affect how the budget can be allocated and vice versa. Information on the cost of advertisements was found on the websites of each media chosen. Strategies and tactics for the campaign were chosen based on the potential to reach wide audiences. According to JCDecaux, many companies in Finland have increased their sales or website visits thanks to outdoor marketing. For example, a Finnish company called *Ukko* reported 50% increased visits in their website during an outdoor marketing campaign. (JCDecaux 2016.) Thus, screens in metros were seen as a potential strategy to reach a high number of people. Travel magazines directly address the potential users of the website because travellers are an important target audience. Paid social media marketing can help organisations find new customers (Gatautis & Vitkauskaitė 2017, 251). For this reason, paid social media was chosen to further enhance visibility during the launch phase.

Although the measurement methods determined in the marketing concept are relevant for the launch campaign, three metrics were separately mentioned in the launch campaign. Tracking the number of visitors during the launch campaign and earned media and PR are both useful in understanding how well the campaign has succeeded in terms of visibility. In addition, since paid advertisement were included in the launch plan, click-through rate was set as a metric. It measures how often paid online advertisements were clicked in relation to the times it was seen online (Wilson 2016, 147).

3.2 Questionnaire

Questionnaire was chosen as a method to complement the desktop study. Questionnaire allows for asking the opinions of the potential users of Finland Abroad website. Since reaching the target audiences through the commissioning party was possible, conducting the questionnaire was a viable choice. Moreover, since there is little research on communication in the context of government organisations, the questionnaire could give new insight into this topic.

The aim of the questionnaire was to gain information on the opinions of potential users of the Finland Abroad website. More precisely, the aim was to collect information on the use and preference of communication channels and what strategies would attract the target audiences. Opinions about communication channels were mapped out in three questions addressing communication channels in different scenarios. Strategies were examined through asking opinions on different types of content produced by the Ministry and the missions. In addition, an open-ended question was included, asking about search words when looking for authoritative services to Finns abroad. This question could benefit the SEO strategy. Finally, background questions were included to understand the context of the respondents and to be able to analyse needs of different groups.

3.2.1 Data Collection Process

The questionnaire was designed with great care to make it convenient to answer to. The questions were written in a neutral manner, avoiding assumptions and bias as much as possible. To ensure ethical conduct, questions on potentially sensitive topics, namely gender and education level, were given an answer option “prefer not to state”. The questionnaire was reviewed and improved multiple times to ensure as clear and useful outcome as possible.

Questions for the research were designed for this specific questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised of the following types of questions: list questions, open questions, category questions, rating questions, and a matrix question. The aim was to ensure that the question types would reflect the purpose of the question and be convenient to answer to. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2016, 453-461.)

Filter questions were employed to separate the most relevant responses from the irrelevant ones in the analysis stage and to prevent the respondent from having to answer to inapplicable questions. (Saunders et al. 2016, 466). In the first question, "how often do you travel abroad", an option for "never" was included in order to filter non-travellers out of the responses. Another filter question was question number three that asked if respondents organise their own travels or if they purchase tour packages. This question was on a scale from 1 to 5, one meaning the respondent always purchases a tour package, and 5 meaning that the respondent always organises their own travels. Considering the website Finland Abroad and its purpose, those who organise their own travels are more relevant, which is why this question was included.

Piloting was conducted over one day, with five voluntary respondents familiar to the author. A remark on the questionnaire's layout was made by the respondents. The questionnaire layout was improved based on the comments of the test participants. The test responses were deleted before starting the actual data collection.

The questionnaire was conducted over a period of 20 days, between April and May 2019. Data was collected with the Webropol questionnaire tool. The questionnaire was distributed as an open web-link which was shared on the Facebook and Twitter pages of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. In addition, some of the Finnish missions shared the questionnaire on their Facebook and Twitter pages. The questionnaire yielded a total of 1095 responses.

Data analysis was mainly conducted using the SPSS software. Data was visualised in Microsoft Excel. The open-ended question was analysed using a word-cloud functionality of Webropol, showing the most frequently appearing words among all answers.

Statistical inference cannot be legitimately tested if the sampling method used is a non-probability method (Saunders et al. 2016, 276). The sampling method used to select respondents to this questionnaire was a non-probability method, and therefore, inference tests were not conducted. In certain cases, correlation was studied using cross tabulation and contingency coefficient.

3.2.2 Results

The results of the questionnaire are presented in this chapter. To introduce the questionnaire respondent profile, background information is presented first. Results related to communication channels are presented after the respondent profile. Finally, results of strategy-related questions are presented.

Respondent Profile

The first background question asked how often the respondents travel. Over 50% of the respondents live abroad. About one fifth of the respondents travel more than three times a year, and a bit more than fifth travel between one to three times a year. Those who travelled once a year or less than that were not a big percentage of the overall results. (Figure 3.)

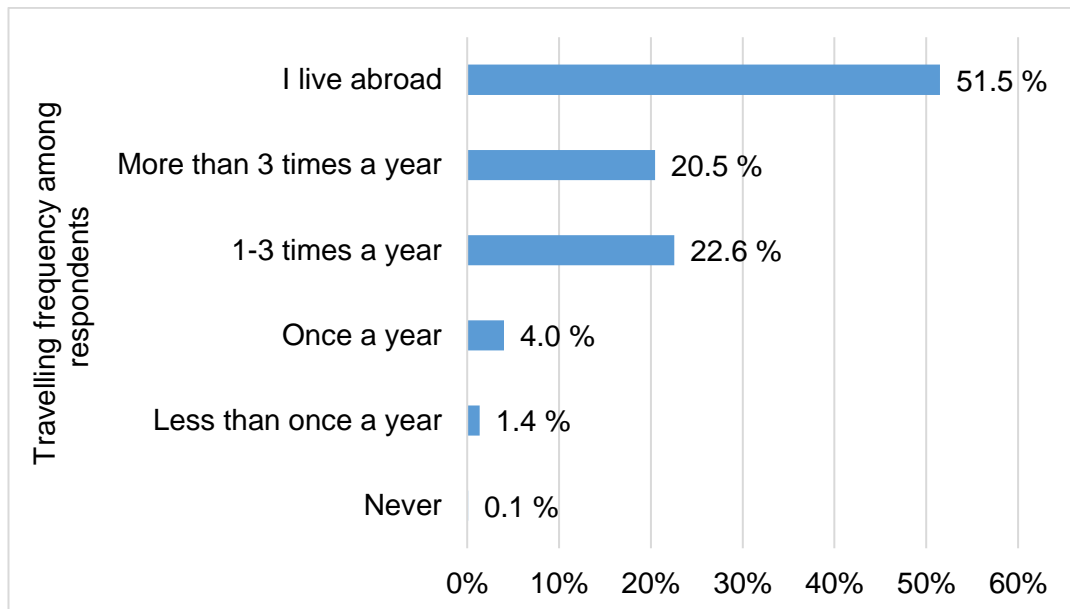


Figure 3. Distribution of travelling frequency among respondents (N=1095)

The reason for the high percentage of those who live abroad is most likely due to the distribution channels of the questionnaire. Responses were collected through the Ministry and missions' Facebook and Twitter pages, channels that expatriates are likely to follow. Overall, most of the respondents travel very often or live abroad. This is beneficial for the aim of this questionnaire because those who travel often or live abroad are the largest target audiences.

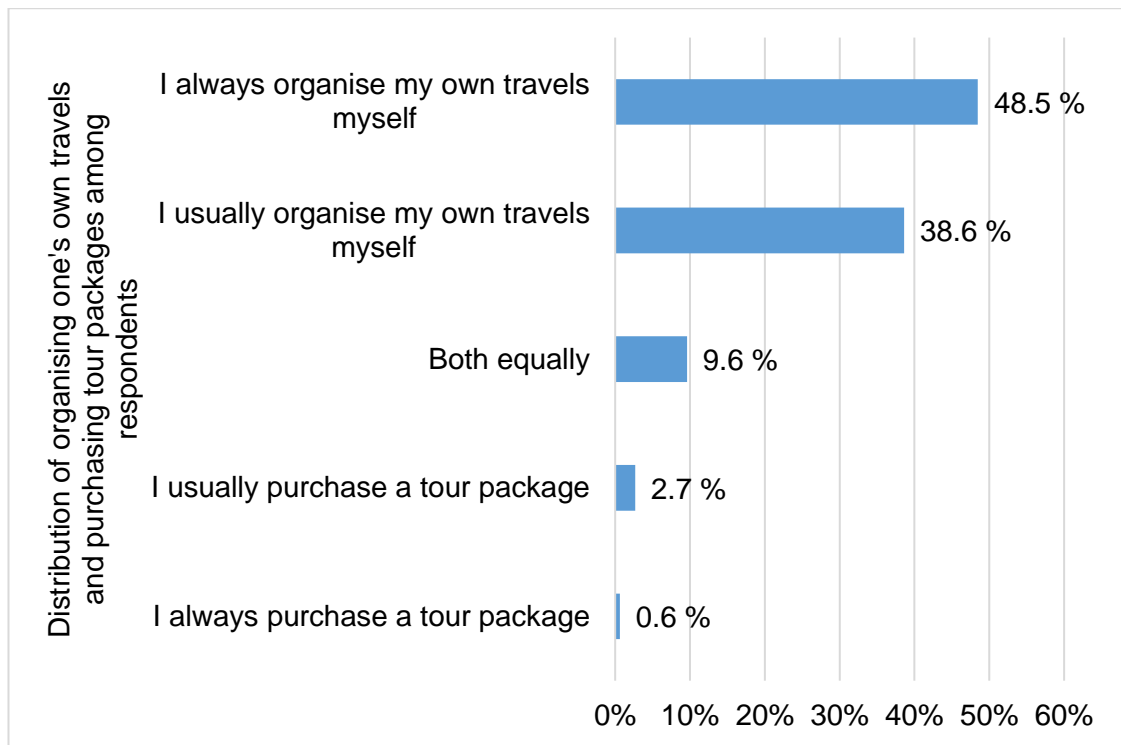


Figure 4. Distribution between self-organised and tour package trips among respondents (N=1083)

One of the background questions asked if the respondents tend to organise their own travels or whether they purchase tour packages. Most respondents organise their own travels usually or always. Less than ten per cent do both equally. Those who usually or always purchase a tour package are in the minority among the respondents. (Figure 4.) This result is favourable considering the website and the communication plan, because those who do not have the support of a travel agency while travelling are more likely to need the Finland Abroad website.

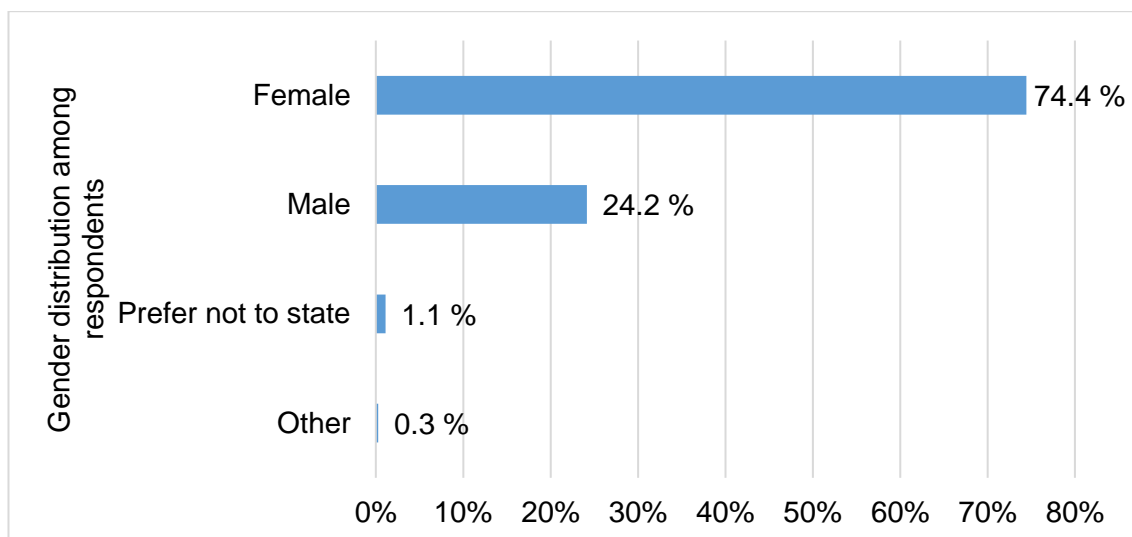


Figure 5. Distribution of gender among the respondents (N=1080)

Gender was asked as one of the background questions. Almost 75% of the respondents were female. Males constituted a little less than 25% of the sample, and the rest chose “other” or did not want to state their gender. (Figure 5.) This result could indicate that females were more active in taking the questionnaire compared to males. There is a possibility that the data is more representative of females than other gender groups.

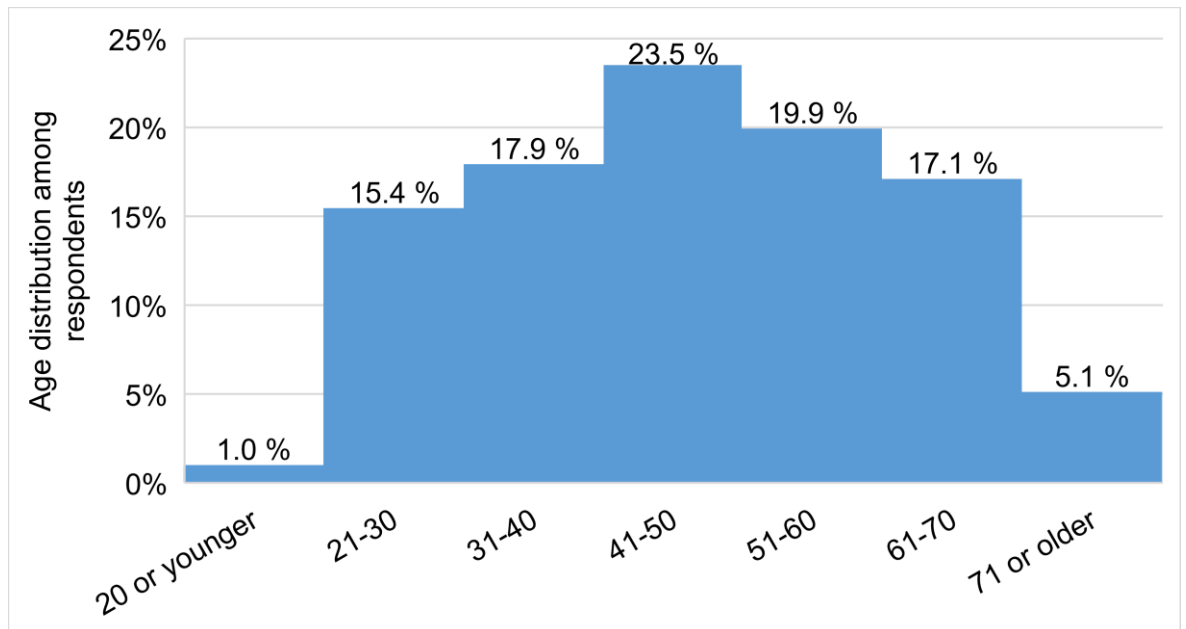


Figure 6. Age distribution among respondents (N=1094)

Age was asked as one of the background questions. The largest age group was those between the ages of 41 and 50, almost one fourth of the respondents. The second-largest group was those between 51 and 60 years, and the third largest group was 31 to 40. There were only 11 participants who were 20 or younger. The oldest group, 71 or older, had 56 respondents. (Figure 6.) This distribution of age groups could mean that the data is not very representative of ages under 20 or ages over 71.

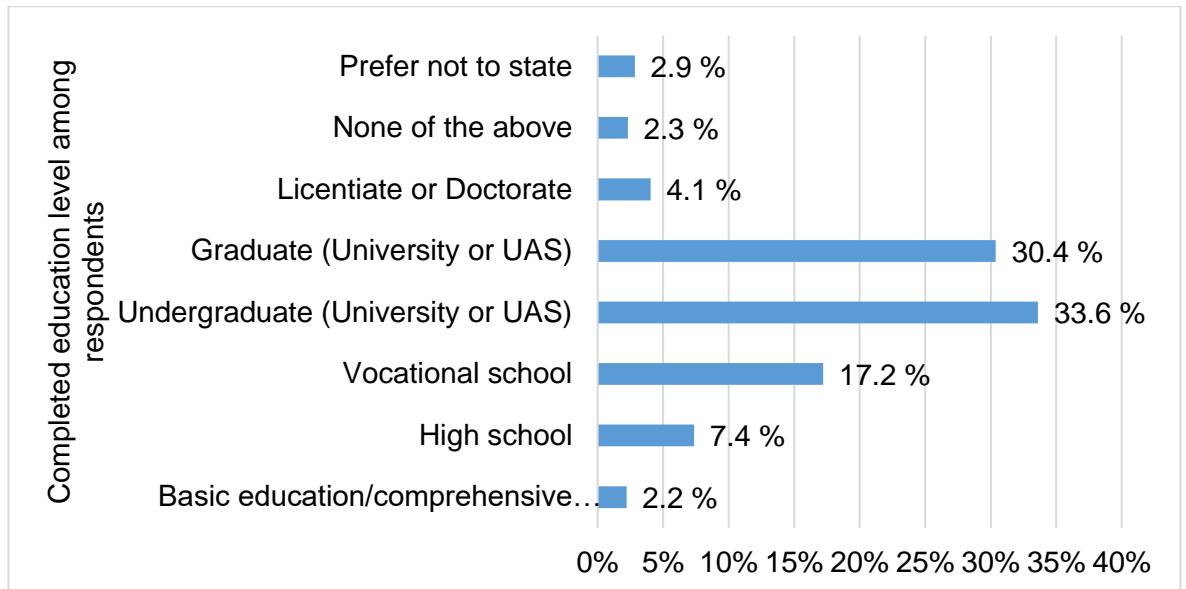


Figure 7. Distribution of the level of education degrees completed by the respondents (N=1086)

Lastly, education background was asked. Most respondents, about one third, had completed an undergraduate degree. The second biggest group was a graduate degree, and the third was vocational school. These three groups were clearly the largest, with other answer options each having less than 10% of the sample. (Figure 7.) This finding possibly reflects the age distribution since most respondents were adults over 20 years old (Figure 6), meaning that many have already completed basic education, and high school or vocational school. Since most respondents have either an undergraduate or a graduate degree, the data could be more representative of these two groups.

Since the objectives of the communication plan are mostly concerned with those who travel or live abroad, and those who organise their own travels, certain types of responses have been filtered out in further analyses. The responses of those who never travel, and of those who “usually” or “always” purchase a tour package when travelling abroad, are left out in all further analyses. This is because the context of these respondents is much less relevant for the purposes of this research. In addition, filtering out these responses does not dramatically decrease the amount of data because these groups were small.

Results of Questions Related to Communication Channels

There were three questions that asked about the use of communication channels and means of acquiring information in some way. The first question asked what sources of information the respondents use when planning a trip abroad. The following figure visualises the results.

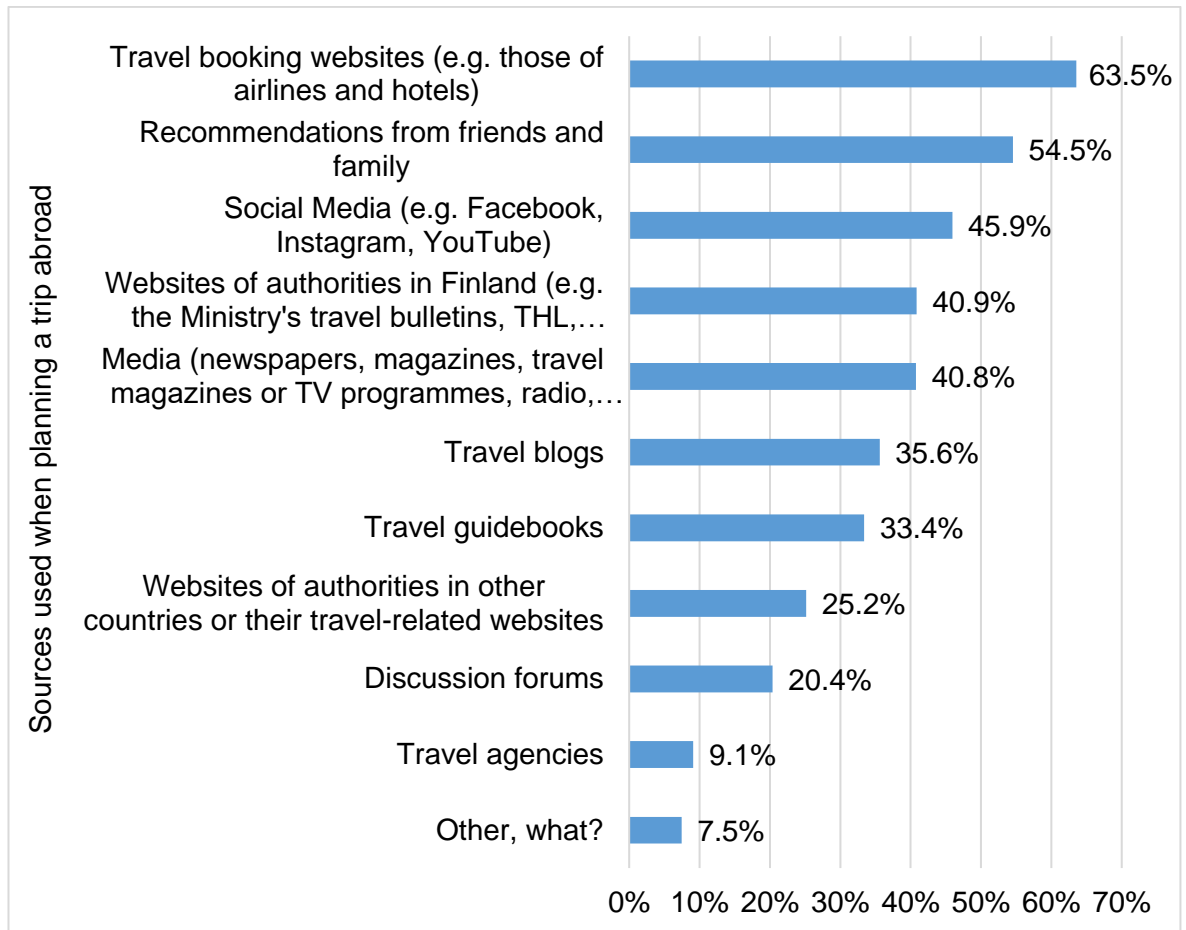


Figure 8. Sources of information used when planning a trip abroad (N=1045)

The three most popular sources of information among respondents were travel booking websites, recommendations from friends and family, and social media. The reason that travel booking websites are so highly selected among participants might be for the reason that if a trip is booked through such website, it is considered as a source of information. The social aspect is very visible: friends and family, as well as social media, were ranked high. (Figure 8.) This could suggest that social media should be one of the most important foci when marketing Finland Abroad.

Sources of information used when planning a trip abroad seem to have certain differences between age groups. Three age groups were compared: 61-70, 41-50, and 21-30. It can be seen that those between 21-30 use social media more (67.9%) than those of ages between 41-50 (48.6%) or those between 61-70 (25.4%). Travel blogs were clearly more popular among age group 21-30 (56%) than those between 61-70 (20.2%). (Appendix 3.) This suggests that people of different ages prefer different sources of information when they are planning a trip abroad.

Correlation between age and choosing social media as a source of information when planning a trip abroad was tested. Correlation was studied with cross tabulation and contingency coefficient, and the value found was 0.283. This only implies weak correlation between age and social media as a source of information when planning a trip abroad. (Appendix 4.)

Sources of information when planning a trip abroad were compared between three education groups: vocational school, undergraduate, and graduate. 26% of those with a vocational school education preferred discussion forums, whereas only 18.4% of undergraduates and 19.5% of graduates use discussion forums. 38.7 % of those with graduate-level education reported travel guidebooks as their sources at 38.7%, whereas guidebooks were a source for 29.6% those with vocational school level education. Websites of authorities in other countries were chosen by 29.1% of graduate-level respondents, whereas only 17.8% of vocational-level respondents chose this option. (Appendix 5.) These differences could reflect the different way of using sources between different groups of education background.

Correlation between education groups and choosing discussion forums as a source of information when planning a trip abroad was studied using cross tabulation and the contingency coefficient. The value found was 0.073, which does not imply correlation. Thus, there was no correlation between choosing discussion forums as a source of information when planning a trip abroad and education background. For this test, answers “none of the above” and “prefer not to state” were left out. (Appendix 6.)

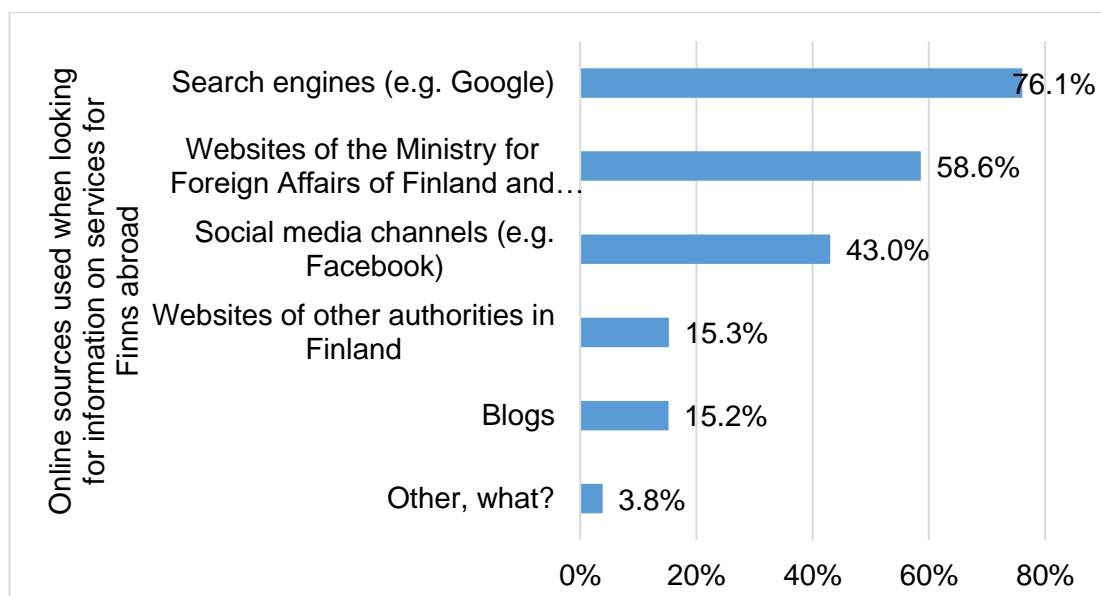


Figure 9. Online sources of information when looking for information on services offered to Finns abroad (N=1041)

The second channel- related question asked which online sources of information the respondents use when looking for information on services offered to Finns abroad. Search engines are the most important sources when looking for this type of information. On the other hand, almost 60% chose the websites of the Ministry and its missions. (Figure 9.) This implies that it is important to pay attention to SEO marketing: optimising search engine visibility helps Finns abroad find the services they are looking for. It is possible that the respondents were overall very knowledgeable of the services and how to find information, since majority lived abroad or travelled several times a year. This could explain the high percentage of the websites of the Ministry and its missions chosen. In addition, since the questionnaire was distributed in the Ministry and its missions' social media, it is likely that the respondents already follow the Ministry's communication on some level.

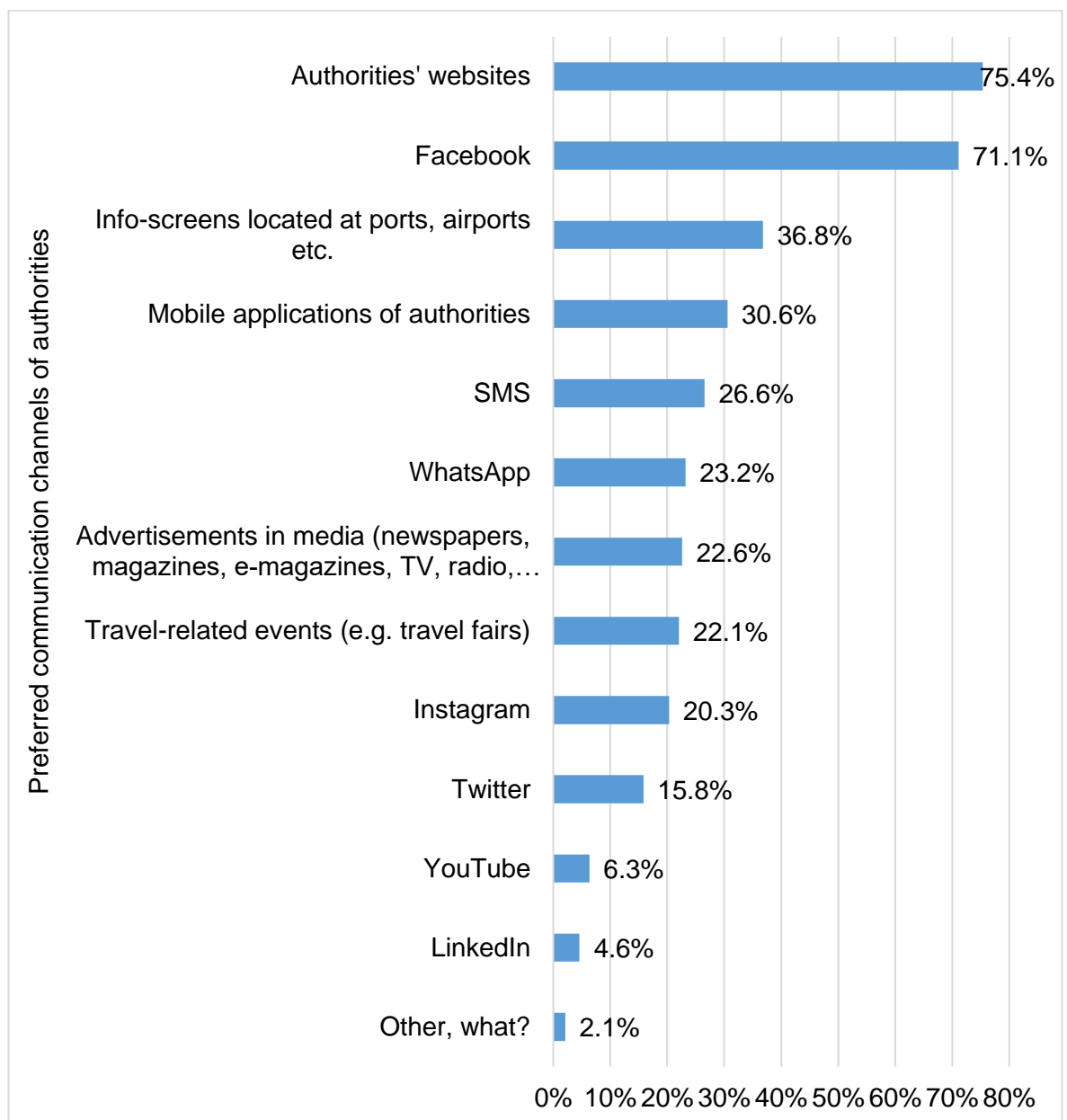


Figure 10. Preferred communication channels of authorities among respondents (N=1043)

Preference of receiving information and communication from authorities, such as the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, was asked. The two clearly most preferred channels were authorities' webpages by over 75% and Facebook by over 70%. Other social media channels, YouTube, Twitter, and Instagram were far less popular. (Figure 10.) However, the importance of Facebook is in line with social media being the third most popular source of information when planning a trip abroad (Figure 8). Info screens in ports and airports were the third most preferred group (Figure 10). This could suggest that the context and timing are important factors when trying to reach the target audiences.

Age seems to have some impact on preferred communication channels. The age groups 21-30, 41-50 and 51-60 were compared. The group of those of age 21-30 seem to prefer social media channels more than those between ages of 41 and 50 and those between 51-60. For example, Instagram seems liked (41.1%) among those between 21-30, whereas it is less popular among ages between 41-50 (18.2%) and those between 51-60 (14.5%). (Appendix 7.) This result is in line with the comparison between the age groups in sources of information when planning a trip abroad (Appendix 3). This could imply that including different channels in the communication plan would reach different age groups efficiently.

Preferred communication channels between males and females were compared. Females prefer info-screens (40.3%) more than males do (27%). Males prefer YouTube (10.1%) almost twice more than females (5.1%) do. LinkedIn, Twitter, WhatsApp, SMS, and mobile applications of authorities were more popular among males than females. (Appendix 8.) Correlation was studied between gender and choosing YouTube as a preferred communication channel for authorities. The comparison was made only between males and females, leaving answers "other" and "prefer not to state" out due to smaller group sizes. However, no correlation was found. The value found using contingency coefficient was 0.088 which does not indicate correlation between choosing YouTube as a preferred channel for authorities and gender. (Appendix 9.)

Results of Questions Related to Strategies

One of the questions asked about the importance of different types of contents in the Ministry and missions' communication to Finns who travel or live abroad. Knowledge on how to act in a crisis situation and how to prepare for crisis situations were the two most important choices among the respondents. This suggests that content and information related to safety are perceived the most important. News and other information were per-

ceived less important than safety and practical matters. The least important was “information on services offered to companies by Finnish embassies”. (Appendix 10.) This finding could imply that most respondents were individuals who travel for their own leisure purposes rather than for work and business opportunities. Furthermore, it is expected for people to be more concerned about safety rather than common knowledge or business opportunities, especially during crisis situations.

There are some differences in perception of importance of different content types between groups of different travelling frequency. Two distinct groups were compared: those who travel 1-3 times a year, and those who live abroad. Those who travel abroad perceive travel bulletins as more important (3.60 out of 4) than those who live abroad (3.18 out of 4). This is probably due to the fact that when travelling often, monitoring different reports from destinations becomes important, whereas permanently staying in a country poses no such need. On the other hand, those who live abroad perceived knowledge on authoritative services important (3.56 out of 4) whereas to those who travel 1-3 times a year it was less important (3.29 out of 4). (Appendix 11.) This reflects the different needs of information of these two different groups. This information is useful when planning marketing communication for Finland Abroad because it aids in designing different types of content for different target audience segments.

The respondents were asked in an open-ended question about what kind of search words they would use for searching for information on services offered to Finns abroad. When considering words containing at least five letters (in Finnish), the six most frequent words were embassy, Finland's, abroad, passport, services, and visa (*suurlähetystö, suomen, ulkomailla, passi, palvelut, viisumi*, in Finnish, respectively). Other frequently appearing words were for example: consulate, consular services, mission, travelling, vaccinations, and Finn. The number of responses given to this open question was 687. These words can be used in search engine optimisation. SEO is an important aspect considering the fact that it is the most used source of information when looking for information on services to Finns abroad (Figure 9).

3.3 Limitations, Reliability and Validity

The limitations to the research include the fact that the desktop study and the questionnaire were conducted in the context of Finland Abroad website and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. This means that the results might not be of use to other parties, and the value of the results could be limited.

The author is external to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The author lacks the knowledge and experience that an employee might have on the communication practices or other related matters. Thus, there is a risk that some of the elements chosen to the marketing communication plan are not suitable. It is also possible that the decisions and suggestions on the marketing communication plan made based on the questionnaire results are not realistic or otherwise suitable.

Inference tests were not made because the sampling method for the questionnaire was a non-probability method. Thus, no generalisations on the population can be made on a statistical basis. Although suggestions based on the results were made carefully, it is possible that the results are not generalisable. Moreover, reliability and validity can only be narrowly assessed.

Reliability refers to consistency in results obtained from a study when repeated or conducted by different researchers (Saunders et al. 2016, 726). Since the questionnaire was designed for and used for this particular purpose, it was only conducted once. For this reason, it is difficult to truly evaluate reliability of the questionnaire. It is unknown at this stage whether the questionnaire would yield similar results if conducted multiple times.

Validity measures how well the method measures what it is trying to measure (Saunders et al. 2016, 730). In the questionnaire, validity was considered when designing it. The questions were carefully constructed, trying to word the questions so that they would ask what they intend to ask and not something else. In the piloting phase, the respondents did not report incomprehensible questions.

4 Discussion

The objective for this thesis was to construct a comprehensive marketing communication plan for the Finland Abroad website. This objective was achieved through completing the project tasks set in the beginning of the project. The theoretical framework established a context in which the marketing communication plan was to be made and discussed the elements and the structures that should be taken into account when making one. More precise elements and the contents for the actual marketing communication plan were achieved by conducting the desktop study and the questionnaire.

Findings of the desktop study and the questionnaire supported each other. The desktop study was used to research all aspects needed for the marketing communication plan, whereas the questionnaire was designed to get more insight to forming the communication channels and strategies. Although social media channels were already considered in the desktop study phase, the results of the questionnaire strongly supported the use of social media channels. It became much clearer that social media should be an important component in the marketing communication plan.

4.1 Key Findings

The questionnaire results indicate that social media and online channels are widely used among respondents. When planning a trip abroad, travel booking websites and social media are among the third most popular channels. Similarly, the two most preferred channels for authorities' communication are the websites of authorities and Facebook. When searching for information on services offered to Finns abroad, search engines are the most popular choice. Between different types of contents, safety-related content is regarded as the most important in the Ministry's communication.

Some differences between different respondent groups were observed. Age seems to have some impact on which channels the respondents use: weak correlation was found between age and using social media as a source when planning a trip abroad. Respondents with different education levels had slightly different preferences in channels when planning a trip abroad. Gender seems to have some impact on the preferred communication channels of authorities. Opinions on the importance of different content types differ between those who live abroad and those who travel 1-3 times a year.

The questionnaire results supported the theoretical framework and the desktop study findings. According to the desktop study findings, social media is useful because it is engaging and interactive. There are numerous social media platforms, enabling different tactics. Moreover, social media channels, especially Facebook, are widely used. In addition, as discussed in chapter 2.3, Facebook can be a useful tool for government authorities.

Two distinctive themes can be found from the findings summarised above. Firstly, digitalisation and social media carry significant importance in marketing communication, even in the context of government organisations. Secondly, varied channels and strategies are needed to reach various target audiences. This is implied by the differences in preferences observed between different respondent groups.

The results regarding digital and social media marketing show that having an established social media presence is expected, even in the context of government organisations. Especially Facebook seems to be a communication channel that is expected from authorities. In general, online communication channels seem to be the most important channels for travellers and expatriates when looking for information on travel-related matters or authoritative services. The popularity of online and social media channels is not a surprising result, considering the time context – in today's world, digitalisation and social media seem to be the norm in every discussion regarding marketing. Nevertheless, the practical implications are clear: social media should be emphasised in marketing communication in the marketing of Finland Abroad.

Using varied channels and strategies is needed to reach different groups of respondents. Although the target audiences defined for Finland Abroad are based on behavioural factors, within these target groups there can be different ways of using channels and strategies. Age, gender, and education background can all slightly impact the sources that target audiences use. Younger groups use social media more than those who are older. For this reason, social media best reaches the younger generations, whereas the more traditional channels could reach the older generations. Moreover, while females can be reached through channels like info-screens, YouTube could be one of the best ways to reach males. Although in only one studied case correlation was found, the results imply some different preferences between respondent groups. Since there are differences within the target audiences, there should be several different channels in the marketing communication plan. This way, reaching a wider audience is possible.

4.2 Evaluation of the Outcome

Considering the thesis objective and project management, the process was carried out successfully. The project tasks set were all completed and supported the thesis process. The deadlines were respected, and the schedule was followed mostly as planned, with some adjustments made along the way. Communication between the author, thesis advisors and the commissioning party was efficient along the thesis process. Cooperation between the commissioning party and the author was professional and supported the author in constructing the marketing communication plan.

The theoretical framework supported the creation of the marketing communication plan. Understanding the role of marketing communication and its relationship between other disciplines in the field of marketing helped the author to better understand the purpose of the marketing communication plan. Theory of the communication planning process formed the basis for the structure of the plan and to the understanding of necessary stages in the process. Since the context is a government organisation, researching marketing in the public sector helped the author to understand the differences between marketing communication in the private and public sectors.

Considering the fact that the results of the questionnaire showed the importance of social media, the theoretical framework could have focused more on social media and other strategies. On the other hand, the objective was to create a comprehensive marketing communication plan, not only a social media marketing plan. Moreover, the importance of social media, especially Facebook, was truly revealed when analysing the questionnaire results. Choosing to discuss the elements and strategies of a marketing communication plan in the theoretical framework could have resulted in a scattered framework because the marketing communication plan includes various specific elements. It seemed more useful to conduct a desktop study when deciding on the specific components of the marketing communication plan.

The methodology chosen enabled the author to construct a marketing communication plan that bases onto both literature and opinions of the target audiences. The results of the questionnaire could be useful to the commissioning party in their other marketing communication efforts, despite the fact that the questionnaire was conducted in the context of the Finland Abroad website. Because research in the field of public sector communication is scarce, this research could add some value to communication planning of other Finnish authorities. This research could, at the very least, provide ideas on what to ask their websites' potential target audiences. Although the questionnaire was a valuable element due

to the insight from target audiences, desktop study was needed to research various elements, such as the situation analysis and strategies. Overall, both methods fit the purpose of this thesis and contributed to creating the marketing communication plan.

The outcome presents new insights for the field of marketing communication and the Finnish marketing environment. As the Finland Abroad website is new, there was a need to create a plan which could raise awareness among Finnish target audiences. Furthermore, the questionnaire conducted potentially adds value to the research of marketing communication in the context of Finnish government organisations. Moreover, the plan presents a new marketing communication plan for a government-administered website.

The outcome is a comprehensive marketing communication plan. It considers different target audiences and communication channels and includes various strategies and tactics. It includes ideas for the future, tied to the annual time context. It also offers a complete plan for the launch phase. It suggests measurements to assess the performance if the plan is implemented. Thus, it includes the most relevant elements needed in a marketing communication plan.

Communication planning is a continuous process. This means that the marketing communication plan will most likely need revising and editing after implementation. Although the marketing communication plan is based on research, some of the suggestions might not work in practice. In such cases, the plan would need to be adjusted. It is also likely that new ideas will emerge while the plan is being implemented, which is also a potential reason for adjusting the plan.

4.3 Reflection on Learning

Project management was one of the most successful aspects during this thesis process. I kept my files organised and planned my work beforehand. I had expected that the project will take a lot of time, probably more than anticipated. For this reason, I set my schedule loosely in order to have time for unexpected issues or delays. This was a good decision because some tasks took less time and some more time than I had originally thought.

One of the most challenging things was staying within the scope of a bachelor's thesis. Since my thesis is project-based and the main goal was to make a marketing communication plan, there was a risk of adding too much work by deciding to conduct the questionnaire. However, I managed to stay within the scope. The disadvantage is that the questionnaire analysis is probably not as sophisticated as it could be. However, I am glad that I

included the questionnaire to get insight from the potential users. I think it brings more value to the marketing communication plan.

If I was to conduct a similar thesis project, I would plan it slightly differently. I would still plan the schedule loosely and outline the main things to do. I would also adapt my project management and schedule as needed, as I have done during this process. What I would plan differently is the writing. I would most likely plan each chapter paragraph by paragraph, outlining what I want to say in each one. During this thesis process, I only outlined the main things to say within each chapter, not considering each paragraph before actually writing them. In other words, I would plan the outline of my thesis report in much more detail before starting to write it.

This thesis process has deepened my knowledge and understanding on conducting academic research, especially one that has practical applications. I was able to implement many of the skills I learned during my studies. I was able to implement and practise my questionnaire-designing skills, as well as skills in analysing the questionnaire results. Since there is a concrete, practical result to my research, I had to learn about balancing between the research and the practice. I believe this has improved my understanding of research projects with practical applications.

Writing this thesis has given me the opportunity to work on a long-term project, during which I had the chance to cooperate between the commissioning party and the thesis advisors. This collaboration was fruitful because I was able to develop my skills in not only personal project management, but in managing a commissioned project. I see this as valuable experience considering my future work and career. Furthermore, I have learned that I take pleasure in working in a continuous project that requires patience and skill to consider multiple things at once.

I am glad having discovered some skills and knowledge which I wish to acquire after completing this thesis. Although I did the best I could in writing an academic thesis report, I was not able to write as eloquently as I wished. Thus, I will take time to improve my academic writing skills in the future. Furthermore, writing this thesis has strengthened my interest towards academic research and further studies. I have already learned a lot about the academic research process, but I wish to improve and practise this skill more in the future.

References

- Amaresan, S. 2018. What is Social Listening & Why Is It Important? HubSpot Blog. URL: <https://blog.hubspot.com/service/social-listening>. Accessed: 17 August 2019.
- Andreasen, A. R. & Kotler, P. 2003. Strategic Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations. Sixth Edition. Prentice Hall. Upper Saddle River.
- Blakeman, R. 2018. Integrated Marketing Communication. Creative Strategy from Idea to Implementation. 3rd Edition. Rowman & Littlefield. Lanham.
- Butler, P. & Collins, N. 1995. Marketing Public Sector Services: Concepts and Characteristics. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 1995, 11, pp. 83-96.
- Cornelissen, J. 2017. Corporate Communication. A Guide to Theory & Practice. 5th Edition. Sage Publications. Thousand Oaks.
- Cruz, A. & Karatzas, S. 2017. Developing an Effective Digital Presence. In Heinze, A., Fletcher, G., Rashid, T. & Cruz, A. Digital and Social Media Marketing. A Results-Driven Approach, pp. 138-160. Routledge. Abingdon.
- Dahl, S. 2018. Social Media Marketing. Theories & Applications. 2nd Edition. Sage. London.
- Fenton, A., Mohamad, M. & Jones, A. 2017. Social Media. In Heinze, A., Fletcher, G., Rashid, T. & Cruz, A. Digital and Social Media Marketing. A Results-Driven Approach, pp. 190-213. Routledge. Abingdon.
- Finland Abroad 2019. Front page. URL: <https://finlandabroad.fi/frontpage>. Accessed: 6 September 2019.
- Gatautis, R. & Vitkauskaitė, E. 2017. Paid Advertising - Search, Social and Affiliate. In Heinze, A., Fletcher, G., Rashid, T. & Cruz, A. Digital and Social Media Marketing. A Results-Driven Approach, pp. 238-259. Routledge. Abingdon.
- Graham, P. 1994. Marketing in the Public Sector: Inappropriate or Merely Difficult? *Journal of Marketing Management*, 1994, 10, pp. 361-375.

- Heinze, A. 2017. Search Engine Optimisation: Strategy Implementation. In Heinze, A., Fletcher, G., Rashid, T. & Cruz, A. Digital and Social Media Marketing. A Results-Driven Approach, pp. 161-189. Routledge. Abingdon.
- Iredale, S., Heinze, A. & Williams, M. 2017. Content Marketing. In Heinze, A., Fletcher, G., Rashid, T. & Cruz, A. Digital and Social Media Marketing. A Results-Driven Approach, pp. 214-237. Routledge. Abingdon.
- JCDcaux 2016. Ukko.fi tuplasi kävijät mobiilissa. URL: <https://www.jcdcaux.fi/Article/ukkofi-tuplasi-kavijat-mobiilissa>. Accessed: 17 August 2019.
- Juholin, E. 2017. Communicare! Viestinnän tekijän käsikirja. Infor. Helsinki.
- Kaplan, A. M. & Haenlein, M. 2009. The Increasing Importance of Public Marketing: Explanations, Applications and Limits of Marketing within Public Administration. *European Management Journal*, 27, 3, pp. 197-212.
- Karanges, E., Johnston, K. A., Lings, I. & Beatson, A. T. 2018. Brand Signalling: An antecedent of Employee Brand Understanding. *Journal of Brand Management*, 25, 3, pp. 235-249.
- Kelley, L. D., Jugenheimer, D. W. & Sheehan, K. B. 2015. Advertising Media Planning. A Brand Management Approach. 4th Edition. Routledge. New York.
- Kim, C. M. 2016. Social Media Campaigns. Strategies for Public Relations and Marketing. Routledge. New York.
- Kotler, P. & Keller, K. L. 2016. Marketing Management. 15th Edition. Pearson Education. Boston.
- Liu, B. F. & Horsley, J. S. 2007. The Government Communication Decision Wheel: Toward a Public Relations Model for the Public Sector. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 19, 4, pp. 377-393.
- Liu, B. F., Horsley, J. S. & Levenshus, A. B. 2010. Government and Corporate Communication Practices: Do the Differences Matter? *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 38, 2, pp. 189-213.

- Matkustusturvallisuus 2019. Kansainväliset kirjeenvaihtajat. URL: <https://matkustusturvallisuus.fi/kirjeenvaihtajat/>. Accessed: 18 August 2019.
- Messukeskus 2019. About us. URL: <https://messukeskus.com/messukeskus/?lang=en>. Accessed: 25 August 2019.
- Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2018a. The history of foreign affairs administration in Finland. URL: <https://um.fi/history>. Accessed: 9 December 2018.
- Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2018b. Strategic priority areas in the Foreign Service. URL: <https://um.fi/documents/35732/0/Strategic+priority+areas+in+the+Foreign+Service+14.3.2018+%282%29.pdf/8802ce3a-056f-5ca6-08e9-1cb776a7342b>. Accessed: 9 December 2018.
- Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2018c. Finnish missions abroad. URL: <https://um.fi/missions>. Accessed: 9 December 2018.
- Oltarzhevskiy, D. O. 2019. Typology of contemporary corporate communication channels. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 24, 4, pp. 608-622.
- Pelsmacker, P., Geuens, M. & Bergh, J. 2018. *Marketing Communication. A European Perspective*. 6th Edition. Pearson Education. Harlow.
- Prime Minister's Office Publications 2016. Together, Boldly and Openly – Central Government Communications Guidelines 16/2016. URL: <https://vnk.fi/en/central-government-communications-guidelines>. Accessed: 23 July 2019.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. 2016. *Research Methods for Business Students*. 7th Edition. Pearson Education. Harlow.
- Suomi ulkomailla 2019a. Tietoa sivustosta. URL: <https://finlandabroad.fi/web/finlandabroad/tietoa-sivustosta>. Accessed: 6 September 2019.
- Suomi ulkomailla 2019b. Ranska. URL: <https://finlandabroad.fi/web/fra/etusivu>. Accessed: 6 September 2019.
- Ulkoministeriö 2018a. Ulkoasiainhallinnon synty. URL: <https://um.fi/ulkoasiainhallinnon-synty>. Accessed: 9 December 2018.

Ulkoministeriö 2018b. Suomen itsenäistymistä edeltävä aika: ulkoasioiden hoito autonomian aikana. URL: <https://um.fi/suomen-itsenaistymista-edeltava-aika>. Accessed: 9 December 2018.

Ulkoministeriö 2018c. Suomen itsenäistyminen: ulkoasianhallinnon synty ja alkuvaiheet. URL: <https://um.fi/suomen-itsenaistyminen>. Accessed: 9 December 2018.

Wilson, L. 2016. Tactical SEO. The Theory and Practice of Search Marketing. Kogan Page. London.

Wood, M.B. 2017. Essential Guide to Marketing Planning. 4th Edition. Pearson Education. Harlow.

Yliopiston almanakkatoimisto 2019. Kalenteri vuodelle 2019. URL: <https://almanakka.helsinki.fi/fi/julkaisut/kalenteri-vuodelle-2019.html>. Accessed: 25 August 2019.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Questionnaire

Kysely liittyen ulkomaanmatkailuun ja tiedon hankkimiseen viranomaispalveluista

Kyselyn tarkoituksena on kartoittaa ulkomaanmatkailua sekä tiedon hakua viranomaispalveluista. Tuloksia käytetään uuden Suomi ulkomailla -verkkosivuston viestinnän suunnitteluun ja kehittämiseen.

Vastaukset käsitellään luottamuksellisesti, eikä yksittäisiä vastaajia voi tunnistaa tuloksista tai raporteista.

Kyselyyn vastaaminen vie noin 5 minuuttia.

Kysely toteutetaan osana ulkoministeriön viestintäosaston toimeksiantamaa opinnäytetyötä. Kysymykset liittyen kyselyyn voi osoittaa opinnäytetyön tekijälle osoitteeseen pia.salin@myy.haaga-helia.fi.

1. Kuinka usein matkustat ulkomaille?

- ☐ En koskaan
- ☐ Harvemmin kuin kerran vuodessa
- ☐ Kerran vuodessa
- ☐ 1-3 kertaa vuodessa
- ☐ Enemmän kuin 3 kertaa vuodessa
- ☐ Asun ulkomailla

2. Kun suunnittelet matkaa ulkomaille, mitä tiedonlähteitä käytät?

- ☐ Matkablogeja
- ☐ Sosiaalista mediaa (esim. Facebook, Instagram, YouTube)
- ☐ Suomen viranomaisten verkkosivuja (esim. ulkoministeriön matkustustiedotteet, THL, poliisi)
- ☐ Muiden maiden viranomaisten tai matkailunedistämisen verkkosivuja
- ☐ Mediaa (sanoma- ja aikakauslehdet, matkailualan lehdet, television matkailuohjelmat, radio, verkkolehdet jne.)
- ☐ Matkatoimistoja
- ☐ Matkaopaskirjoja
- ☐ Matkanvaraussivustoja verkossa (esim. lentoyhtiöiden ja hotellien verkkosivuja)
- ☐ Ystävien ja tuttavien mielipiteitä
- ☐ Keskustelupalstoja
- ☐ Jotakin muuta, mitä? _____

3. Kun matkustat ulkomaille, ostatko valmismatkoja vai järjestätkö matkasi itse?

1	2	3	4	5
Ostan aina valmismatkan	Ostan yleensä valmismatkan	Teen yhtä paljon molempia	Järjestän yleensä matkani itse	Järjestän aina matkani itse
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. Mitä lähteitä verkossa käytät, kun etsit tietoa palveluista suomalaisille ulkomaille?

- ☐ Ulkoministeriön ja Suomen suurlähetystöjen verkkosivuja
- ☐ Muiden Suomen viranomaisten verkkosivuja
- ☐ Blogeja
- ☐ Sosiaalisen median kanavia (esim. Facebook)
- ☐ Hakukoneita (esim. Google-hakua)
- ☐ Jotakin muuta, mitä? _____

5. Mitä viestintäkanavia toivoisit viranomaisten käyttävän tiedottaessaan kansalaisille suunnatuista palveluista, esimerkiksi ulkoministeriön palveluista suomalaisille?

- ☐ Viranomaisten omat verkkosivut
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ YouTube
- ☐ Tekstiviestit
- ☐ WhatsApp
- ☐ Matkailualan tapahtumat (esim. messut)
- ☐ Infonäytöt esimerkiksi satamissa, lentokentillä jne.
- ☐ Viranomaisten omat mobiilisovellukset
- ☐ Mainokset mediassa (sanoma- ja aikakauslehdet, verkkolehdet, televisio, radio jne.)
- ☐ Jokin muu, mikä? _____

6. Kuinka tärkeitä seuraavat sisällöt ovat mielestäsi ulkoministeriön ja Suomen suurlähetystöjen viestinnässä ulkomaille matkustaville tai ulkomailla asuville?

	1 Ei ollenkaan tärkeä	2 Jonkin verran tärkeä	3 Tärkeä	4 Erittäin tärkeä
Uutiset suurlähetystön toiminnasta	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Matkustustiedotteet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tieto ja vinkit ongelma- ja kriisitilanteisiin varautumisesta	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tieto ja vinkit miten toimia ongelma- ja kriisitilanteissa (esim. jos passi on kadonnut, on joutunut ryöstetyksi tai tapahtunut luonnonkatastrofi)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tieto Suomen viranomaispalveluista ulkomailla (esim. passin hakeminen ulkomailla, äänestäminen ulkomailla jne.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tieto viisumeista muihin maihin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tieto viisumeista Suomeen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yleinen taustatieto eri maista	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tieto Suomen kansainvälisestä yhteistyöstä	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Perustiedot miksi Suomella on suurlähetystö tai muu edustusto tietyssä maassa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tieto Suomen suurlähettiläästä tietyssä maassa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tieto Suomen ja tietyn maan välisistä suhteista	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tieto suurlähetystöjen tarjoamista palveluista yrityksille	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. Mitä hakusanoja käyttäisit etsiessäsi tietoa viranomaisten tarjoamista palveluista ulkomailla matkaaville tai siellä asuville suomalaisille?

8. Sukupuoli

- ☐ Nainen
- ☐ Mies
- ☐ Muu
- ☐ En halua kertoa

9. Ikä

- ☐ 20 tai alle
- ☐ 21-30
- ☐ 31-40
- ☐ 41-50
- ☐ 51-60
- ☐ 61-70
- ☐ 71 tai yli

10. Mikä on tällä hetkellä korkein suorittamasi tutkinto?

- ☐ Peruskoulu
- ☐ Ylioppilastutkinto
- ☐ Ammatillinen perustutkinto
- ☐ Alempi korkeakoulututkinto (yliopisto tai AMK)
- ☐ Ylempi korkeakoulututkinto (yliopisto tai AMK)
- ☐ Lisensiaatin tai tohtorin tutkinto
- ☐ Ei mikään näistä
- ☐ En halua kertoa

Appendix 2. Questionnaire (English translation)

A questionnaire on travelling abroad and information acquisition from authoritative services

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gain information on travelling habits and information search from authoritative services. The results will be utilised in planning and developing communication for a new website called Finland Abroad. The responses will be handled with confidentiality. Respondents cannot be identified from the results or the reports.

It takes approximately 5 minutes to take the questionnaire.

The questionnaire is conducted as a part of a thesis commissioned by the Department for Communications of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. Questions regarding the questionnaire can be sent to the thesis author at pia.salin@myy.haaga-helia.fi.

1. How often do you travel abroad?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Less than once a year
- ☐ Once a year
- ☐ 1-3 times a year
- ☐ More than 3 times a year
- ☐ I live abroad

2. When planning a trip abroad, what sources of information do you use

- ☐ Travel blogs
- ☐ Social media (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, YouTube)
- ☐ Websites of authorities in Finland (e.g. the Ministry's travel bulletins, THL, police)
- ☐ Websites of authorities in other countries or their travel-related websites
- ☐ Media (newspapers, magazines, travel magazines or TV programmes, radio, e-magazines etc.)
- ☐ Travel agencies
- ☐ Travel guide books
- ☐ Travel booking websites (e.g. those of airlines and hotels)
- ☐ Recommendations from friends and family
- ☐ Discussion forums
- ☐ Other, what?

3. When travelling abroad, do you buy tour packages or do you organise your travels yourself?

1	2	3	4	5
I always purchase a tour package	I usually purchase a tour package	Both equally	I usually organise my own travels myself	I always organise my own travels myself
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. What online sources do you use when looking for services for Finns abroad?

- ☐ Websites of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and its missions
- ☐ Websites of other authorities in Finland
- ☐ Blogs
- ☐ Social media channels (e.g. Facebook)
- ☐ Search engines (e.g. Google)
- ☐ Other, what? _____

5. What communication channels would you prefer when authorities inform citizens about services offered to them, for example services of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs for Finns?

- ☐ Authorities' websites
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ YouTube
- ☐ SMS
- ☐ WhatsApp
- ☐ Travel-related events (e.g. travel fairs)
- ☐ Info-screens located at ports, airports etc.
- ☐ Mobile applications of authorities
- ☐ Advertisements in media (newspapers, magazines, e-magazines, TV, radio, etc.)
- ☐ Other, what? _____

6. How important do you find the following contents in the communication of the Ministry and its missions to those who travel or live abroad?

	1 Not at all important	2 Somewhat important	3 Important	4 Very important
News about a mission's operations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Travel bulletins	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge and tips on preparing for crisis situations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge on how to act in a crisis situation (e.g. a lost passport, robbery, natural disaster)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge on Finland's authoritative services abroad (e.g. applying for a passport, voting abroad etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Knowledge on visas to other countries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge on visas to Finland	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
General knowledge and information on different countries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge of Finland's international cooperation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information on why Finland has an embassy or other mission in a certain country	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information of Finland's ambassador in a certain country	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information on relations between Finland and a certain country	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information on services offered to companies by Finnish embassies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. What search words would you use when searching for information on authoritative services offered to Finns who travel or live abroad?

8. Gender

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Prefer not to state

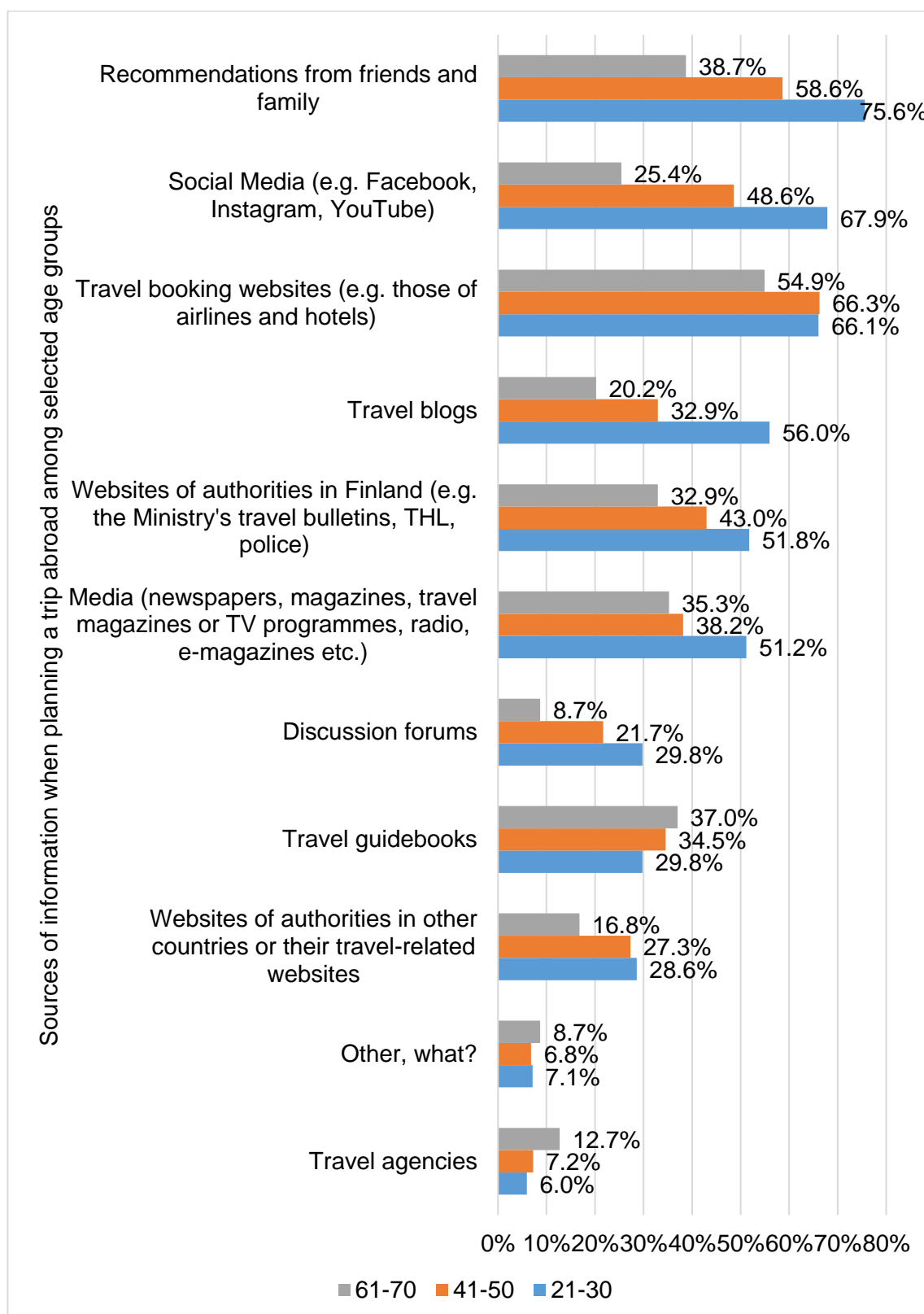
9. Age

- ☐ 20 or younger
- ☐ 21-30
- ☐ 31-40
- ☐ 41-50
- ☐ 51-60
- ☐ 61-70
- ☐ 71 or older

10. What is the highest degree you have completed so far?

- ☐ Basic education/comprehensive school
- ☐ High school
- ☐ Vocational school
- ☐ Undergraduate (University or UAS)
- ☐ Graduate (University or UAS)
- ☐ Licentiate or Doctorate
- ☐ None of the above
- ☐ Prefer not to state

Appendix 3. Sources of information when planning a trip abroad among selected age groups (N=590)

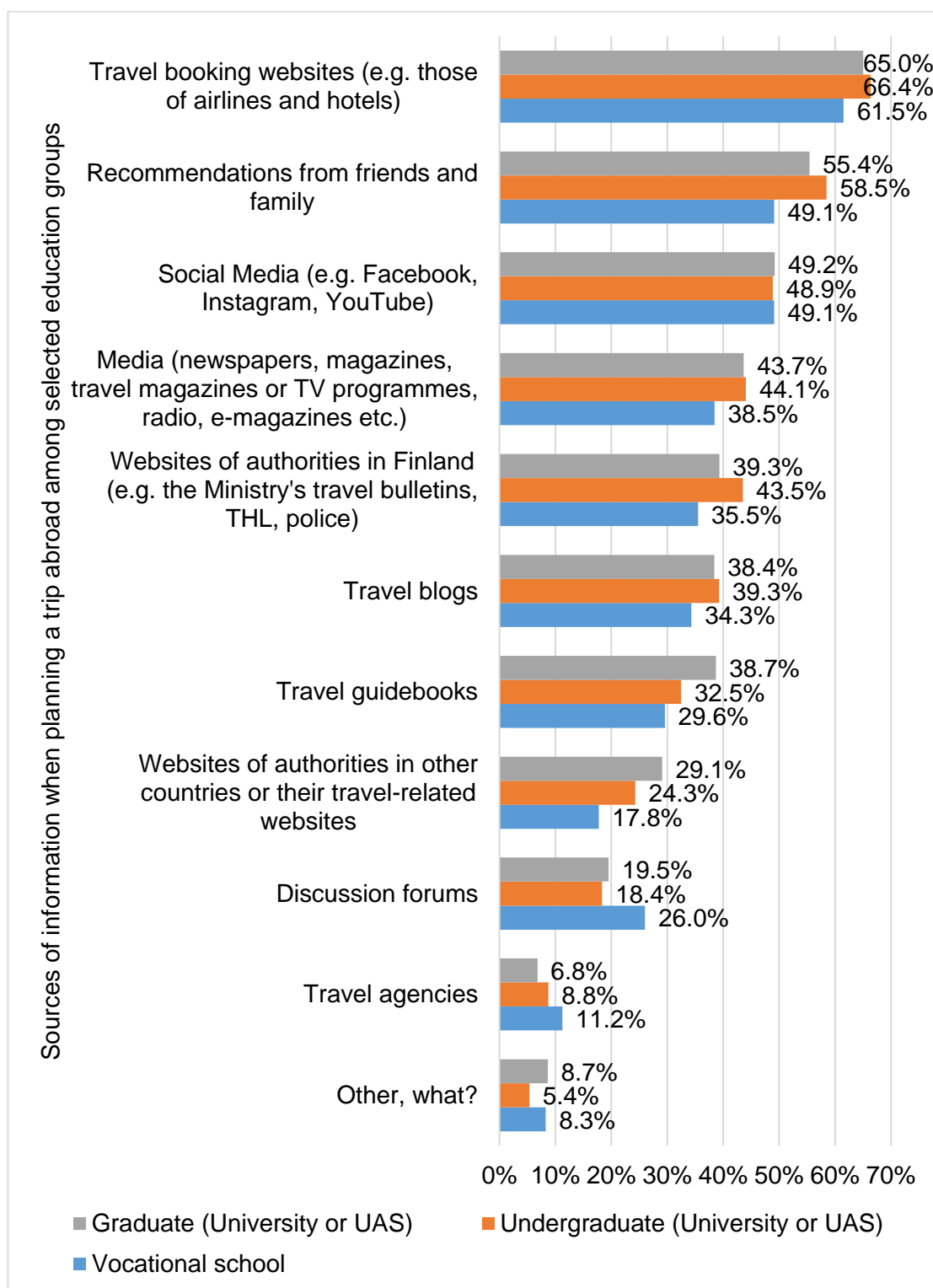


Appendix 4. Correlation test for age and social media channels as a source when planning a trip abroad with cross tabulation and contingency coefficient (N=1044)

		Age							Total
		20 or younger	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	71 or older	
Social Media (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, YouTube)	Not Chosen	1	54	89	128	125	129	38	564
		11.1%	32.1%	46.4%	51.4%	60.7%	74.6%	80.9%	54.0%
	Chosen	8	114	103	121	81	44	9	480
		88.9%	67.9%	53.6%	48.6%	39.3%	25.4%	19.1%	46.0%
Total		9	168	192	249	206	173	47	1044
		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

		Value
Nominal by Nominal	Contingency Coefficient	0.283
N of Valid Cases		1044

Appendix 5. Sources of information when planning a trip abroad among selected education groups (N=846)

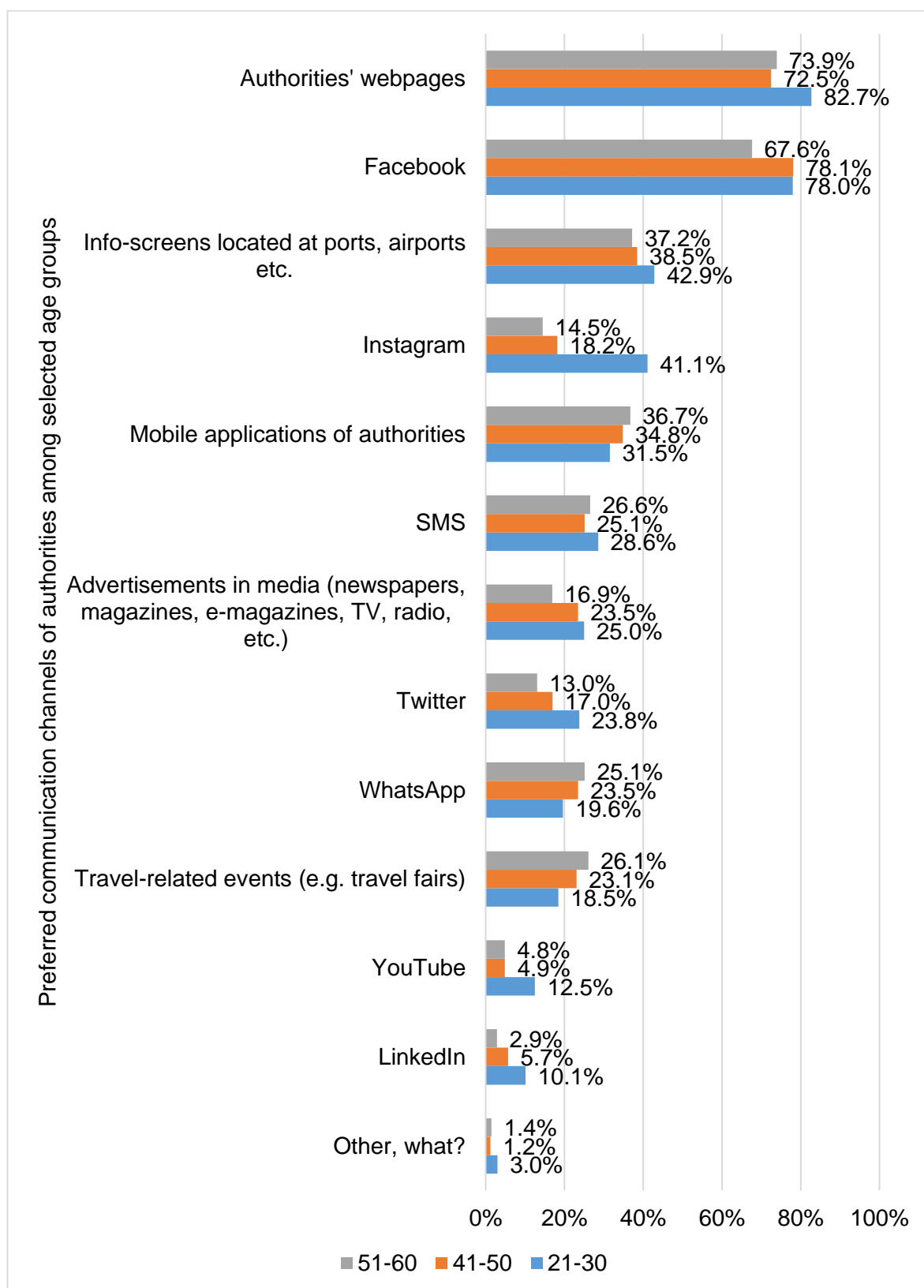


Appendix 6. Correlation test for using discussion forums as a source of information when planning a trip abroad and different education groups with cross tabulation and contingency coefficient (N=986)

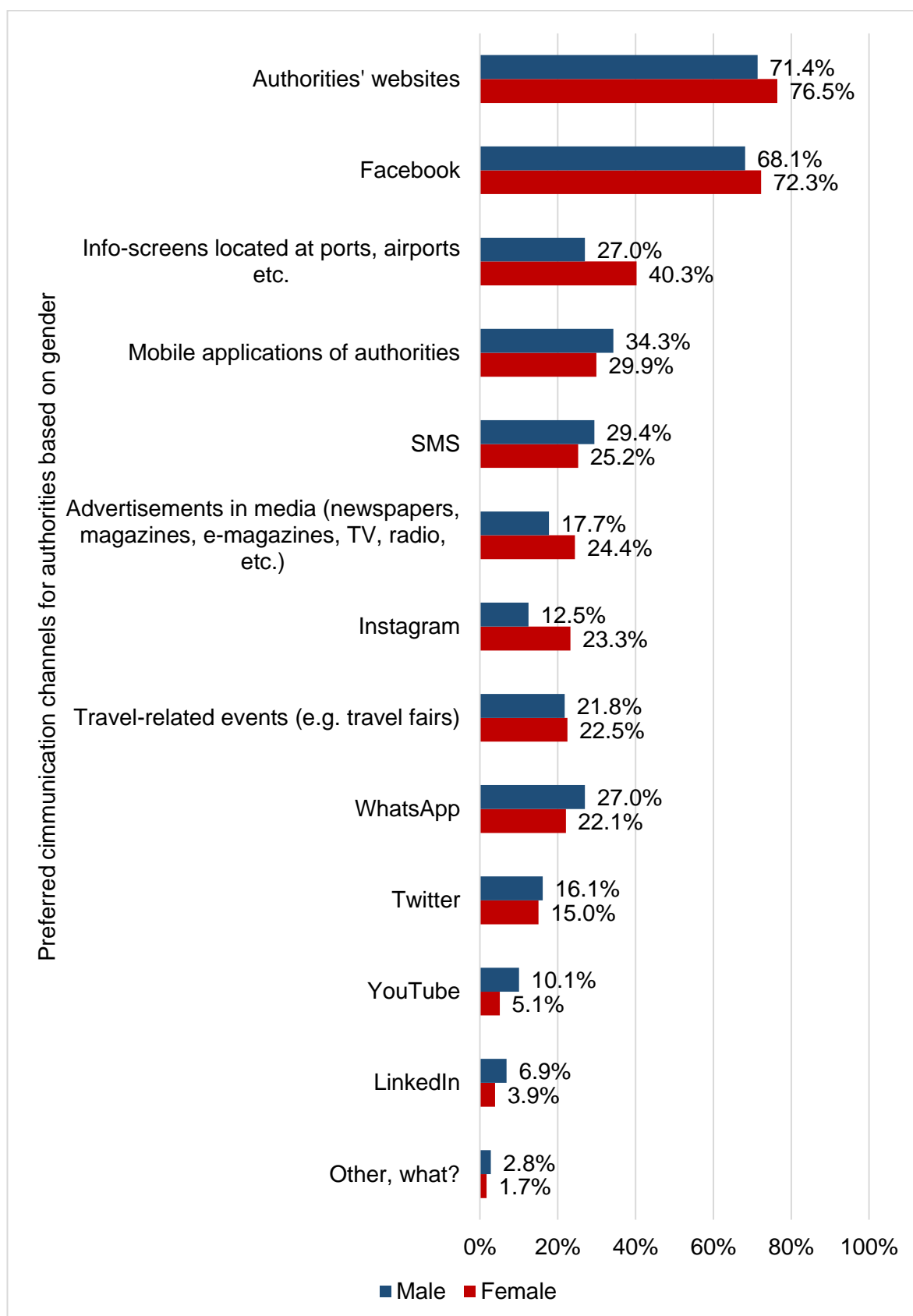
		What is the highest degree or diploma you have completed so far?						
		Basic education/co mprehensive school	High school	Vocation al school	Undergradu ate (University or UAS)	Graduate (University or UAS)	Licentiate or Doctorate	Total
Discussion forums	Not Chosen	17	57	125	289	260	34	782
		81.0%	75.0%	74.0%	81.6%	80.5%	79.1%	79.3%
	Chosen	4	19	44	65	63	9	204
		19.0%	25.0%	26.0%	18.4%	19.5%	20.9%	20.7%
Total		21	76	169	354	323	43	986
		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

		Value
Nominal by Nominal	Contingency Coefficient	0.073
N of Valid Cases		986

Appendix 7. Preferred communication channels for authorities among selected age groups (N=623)



Appendix 8. Preferred communication channels for authorities among selected genders (N=1013)

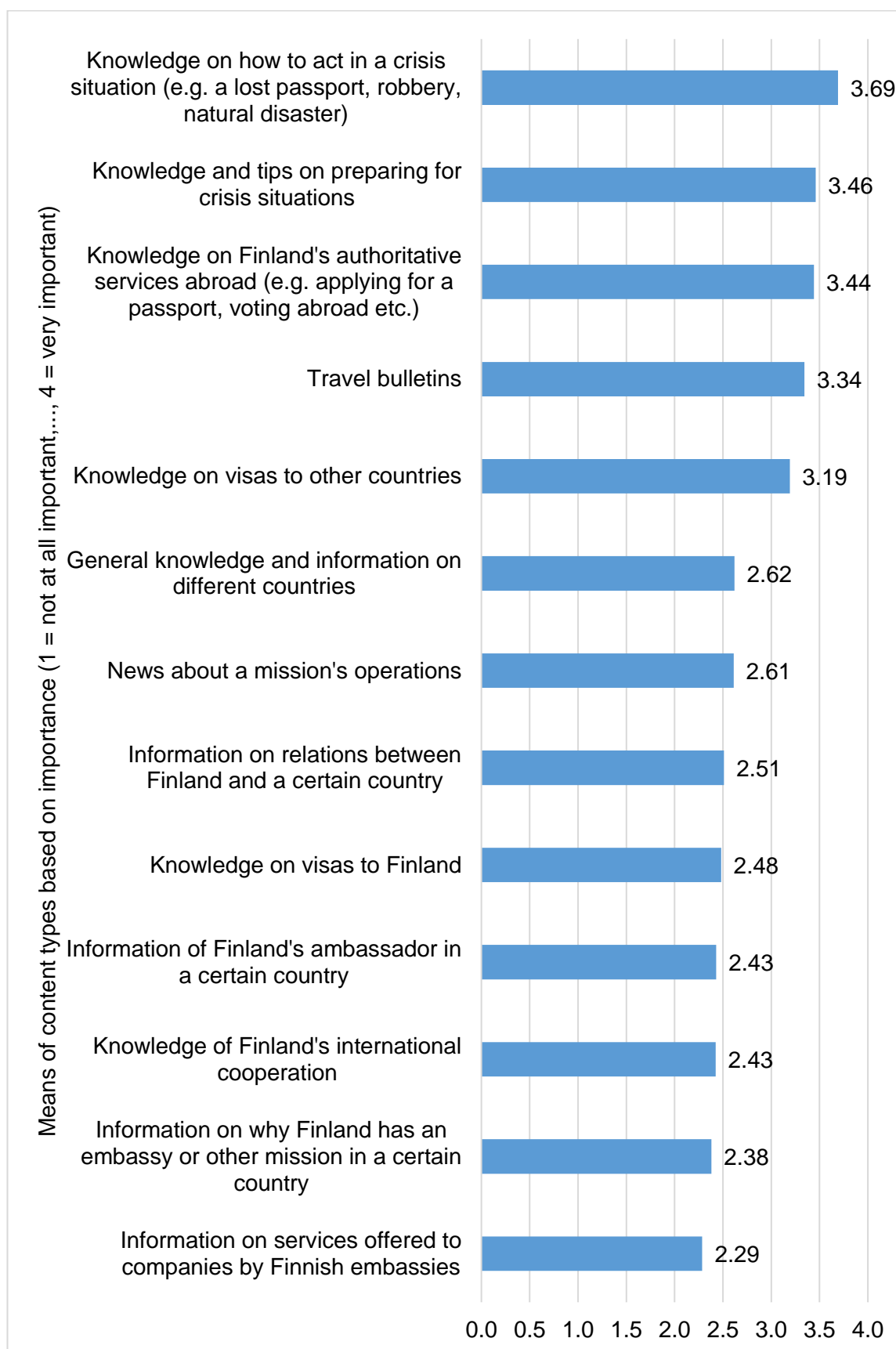


Appendix 9. Correlation test for choosing YouTube as a preferred channel for authorities among females and males with cross tabulation and contingency coefficient (N=1013)

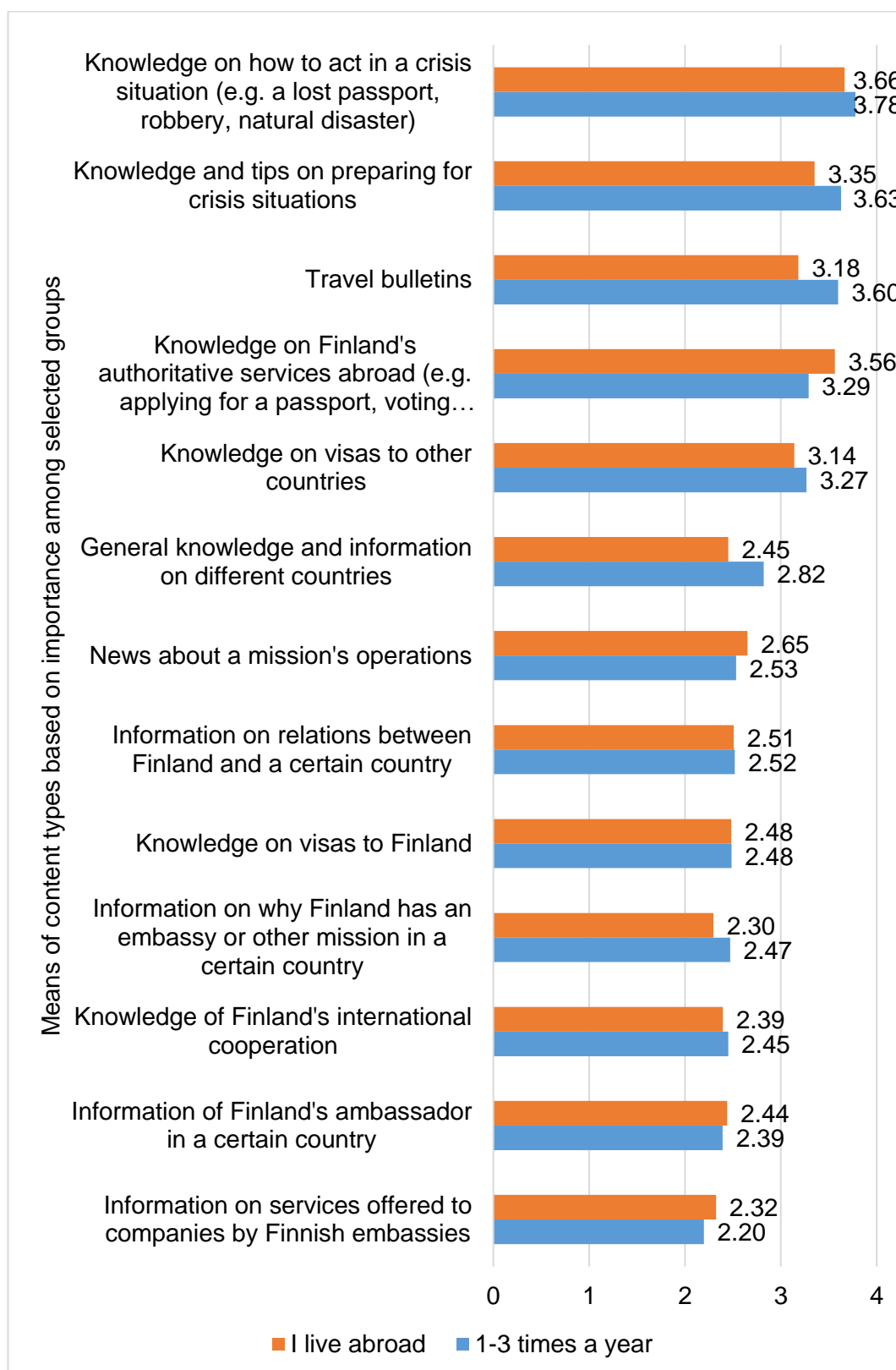
		Gender		Total
		Female	Male	
YouTube	Not Chosen	726	223	949
		94.9%	89.9%	93.7%
	Chosen	39	25	64
		5.1%	10.1%	6.3%
Total		765	248	1013
		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

		Value
Nominal by Nominal	Contingency Coefficient	0.088
N of Valid Cases		1013

Appendix 10. Content types and their means based on importance among respondents (N=1046)



Appendix 11. Content types and their means based on importance among selected groups based on travelling frequency (N=349)



Appendix 12. Marketing Communication Plan for the Finland Abroad Website

Marketing Communication Plan for the Finland Abroad Website

Pia Salin

Table of contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Objectives of the Plan	1
1.2	Situation Analysis.....	2
2	The Marketing Concept for Finland Abroad	8
2.1	Brand Promise	8
2.2	Target Audiences.....	8
2.3	Communication Channels	9
2.4	Strategies and Tools	12
2.5	Tactics and Implementation	13
2.6	Annual Plan	15
2.7	Measurement.....	17
3	Launch Campaign.....	19
3.1	Campaign and Schedule.....	19
3.2	Budget	20
3.3	Measurement.....	21
4	Risks and Concluding Notes	23
	References	24
	Appendices.....	26
	Appendix 1. Finland Abroad Launch Campaign Schedule	26

1 Introduction

This communication plan is designed for the Finland Abroad website, a new website encompassing all the information of Finland's representation abroad. As the website is new, a need to communicate its existence and purpose arises. Thus, this document aims to create a flexible, relevant, and a helpful communication plan for Finland Abroad. This plan is the outcome of the author's bachelor's thesis. This plan is thus constructed using independent study and a questionnaire conducted as a part of the project.

This plan comprises of four parts: the introduction chapter, the marketing concept for Finland abroad, a launch campaign plan, and a final chapter including risks and concluding notes. The introduction chapter lays out the objectives of the plan investigates the environment through PESTLE and SWOT analyses. The marketing concept defines the general framework in the communication plan. It includes the brand promise, target audiences, communication channels, strategies and tools, tactics and implementation, annual plan, and measurement. The launch plan campaign includes a plan for a three-week period, a budget estimation and measurement. Finally, potential risks are defined and concluding notes are made in the final chapter.

By offering two separate plans for differing purposes, this plan offers flexibility. The marketing concept can be used flexibly in all marketing communication related to Finland Abroad. The launch campaign plan is designed to introduce the website to a large audience and communicate its purpose. It is planned to be a starting point for the marketing of the Finland Abroad –website.

The following subchapter lists the objectives of the plan. After that, a situation analysis investigates both internal and external environments. SWOT analysis is then derived from the findings.

1.1 Objectives of the Plan

The objectives for this plan are given by the department for communications of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. The following explains the objectives for the plan.

The objective of this plan is to raise awareness of the Finland Abroad website and its contents in the Finnish market. The aim is that the website will be perceived as a reliable, authoritative service produced by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Finland's missions. Furthermore, the aim is that Finns would use the website when they:

- Are planning to travel abroad
- Live abroad and need services offered by authorities (for example applying for a passport)
- Are faced with an emergency or a crisis while travelling (for example, a theft, an accident)
- Plan to export or expand their business abroad
- Want to find a specific mission of Finland or want to know where Finland has missions
- Want to find the material produced by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs concerning certain country.

To achieve the objectives stated above, this plan aims to offer a feasible, flexible communication plan.

1.2 Situation Analysis

To understand the factors that could affect the communication plan, internal and external environments are analysed. Potential competitors to Finland Abroad are outlined. After analysing these perspectives, SWOT analysis summarising the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats is derived from the findings. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and its missions, as well as the services offered by them, are the analysed parties. The analysis touches the overall operational environment but is mostly concerned with perspectives relevant to Finland Abroad. Communicational aspect is explored where possible as the objective is to create a communication plan. Thus, the situation analysis is done in order to understand the internal and the external environments of the Ministry, and to examine the aspects relevant to Finland Abroad.

Internal Analysis

This internal analysis investigates the internal environment of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and its missions. It explores the role of the Ministry, the role of Finnish missions, the benefits to travelling Finns, communication networks and communication guidelines. These are all closely related to Finland Abroad and its purpose and should thus be considered.

The responsibilities of the Ministry and Finland's missions are broad. The Ministry works internationally and represents Finland in international affairs. Legal affairs, human rights, international cooperation, foreign policy, and external economic relations are examples of the matters that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is actively working on. In addition, missions abroad are part of the Ministry's network that enables offering services that benefit Finns

and the Finnish society. (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2019a, Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2019b.) In addition to the international networks of cooperation and diplomacy, the Ministry is a part of Team Finland, a network of Finnish organisations that help companies to internationalise (Team Finland 2019). Because of the nature of the Ministry's responsibilities and its role, it is important to carefully consider the types of strategies and messages that are appropriate to include in the communication plan.

The role of embassies and other missions includes monitoring the global environment and producing reports on safety and other matters in other countries. This practice helps travelling Finns to prepare for their travels. Missions have an important role in crisis situations, and they can cooperate with local authorities. Missions also monitor trade conditions in different countries, identifying possible threats and opportunities, information useful to Finnish companies looking forward to exporting or expanding abroad. (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2019b.) This useful information can be included in the content shared to users through Finland Abroad.

The work of the Ministry and the missions benefit Finns abroad in multiple ways each year. One common example is the travel notification that Finns can make in a website administered by the Ministry to leave their personal details in case of an emergency or a crisis. In 2017, the number of travel notifications increased and there were almost 267 000 made by travelling Finns. In addition, the Ministry sent information and advice to over 100 travellers concerning unexpected situations. One of the most needed services relates to passports: if a passport is lost or its validity period has ended, new passports can be admitted through the missions abroad. However, in many cases, advisory services are sufficient for travellers in need of help. (Ulkoministeriö 2018.) Finland Abroad benefits Finns by making the needed services easier to access.

The communication network of the Ministry is large. There are several websites that are administered by the Ministry and its missions. It includes channels such as e-magazines on development and trade policy (*Kehityislehti* and *Kauppapolitiikka*), Finland's country image website (*ThisisFINLAND*), and EU-focused informative website about the European Union (*Eurooppatiedotus*). The Ministry uses social media as a part of its communication, mostly Facebook and Twitter. Missions have their own social media channels; many have an Instagram account in addition to Facebook and Twitter. Moreover, there are several blogs written by the employees, describing their work and different aspects of international affairs. (Ulkoministeriö 2019a, Ulkoministeriö 2019b, Ulkoministeriö 2019c.)

The government has set communication guidelines to aid government organisations plan and conduct their communication. Thus, these guidelines are important in terms of the communication by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Emergent themes in the guidelines are openness, reliability, clarity of language, planning and assessing communication, listening to the stakeholders, and interactivity. Along with the guidelines, there are numerous regulations that guide government communication, for example language laws, freedom of expression, and personal data act. (Prime Minister's Office Publications 2016, 4-14.) These guidelines reflect the responsibilities that Finland Abroad must uphold in communication.

Considering the roles and responsibilities of the Ministry and the missions, it can be concluded that their coverage in terms of international networks and information is extensive. A government organisation with such networks and resources is in a unique position. The networks and channels provide numerous opportunities in communication. The communication guidelines set foster openness and reliability, contributing to transparency of communication by the Ministry. The services provided by the Ministry are exclusive, considering only authorities can solve certain issues. The Ministry provides various services to travelling Finns, and the need for those is likely to grow as suggested by the increased number of travel notifications.

External Analysis

This part investigates the external environment of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The environment is analysed through PESTLE analysis, and possible competitors are outlined. PESTLE analysis includes the political, economic, sociocultural, technological, legal, and environmental factors. Some of these aspects are less relevant in the context of Finland Abroad and its communication, thus some aspects are emphasised more than others.

The political, economic, and legal aspects significantly influence the Ministry on a general level. However, they are less important in the context of Finland Abroad. The political aspect is integral to the functions of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The state-level political decisions affect the operations of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2019c.) Considering the economic aspect, The Ministry's financial planning is based on the documents and decisions of the government. Thus, the economic factors affecting the government and its budgets can affect the Ministry and its financials. (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2019c.) The legal aspect is most evident in the legislation that governs the Ministry and the missions. These laws and decrees dictate things such as the functions and missions of the Ministry and how the Ministry is organised. (Ulkoministeriö 2019d,

Finlex 2005.) These aspects are not directly related to Finland Abroad, but they can indirectly affect it, which is why it is important to acknowledge them.

Sociocultural factors relevant to the website and the communication plan include those related to travelling and migration. The number of trips made abroad by Finns has increased by 69% in ten years. Certain types of trips abroad, such as cruises to Estonia or Sweden, have decreased in number within this time. (Tilastokeskus 2019, 12.) On the other hand, certain trips have increased in popularity, such as those to Southern Europe (Tilastokeskus 2019, 1). Considering migration, the overall trend is growing: In 2017, nearly 17 000 people emigrated from Finland, and nearly 32 000 immigrated. Immigration has grown more than emigration: between 2005 and 2017, immigration grew by more than 10 000 people, whereas emigration grew by less than 5 000 people. (Tilastokeskus 2018.) If the growing trend in travelling and moving abroad continues, the need for services offered by the Ministry and the missions is likely to grow. Finland Abroad can answer to the many needs of travellers and expatriates.

The technological aspect is visible in the e-government services as well as making reservations and buying tickets on the internet. In general, Finland uses advanced e-government services: in the United Nations' 2018 ranking, Finland was the 6th leading country in e-government development and has a very high e-government development index (United Nations 2018, 86, 89). Moreover, travelling is a sector greatly affected by internet: in 2018, 88% of trips abroad were booked using the internet, and 94% of those who flew to their destination booked their tickets on the internet (Tilastokeskus 2019, 11). Finland Abroad makes it easier to find the information and services that Finns might need when travelling.

The environmental aspect is a topical issue in today's tourism industry. Since tourism is closely related to Finland Abroad, the tourism aspect of environmental issues is relevant. Climate change is a threat for many and could potentially alter tourism and tourism destinations. There are estimates stating that if the global temperature rises, warm areas like Southern Europe could attract less tourists because of hot weather. On the other hand, Northern Europe could attract more tourists as the climate warms. (Ilmasto-opas 2019a.) Travelling, especially by plane, could decrease in popularity as people try to adjust their lifestyles to be more environmentally friendly (Ilmasto-opas 2019b). These societally significant changes, in conjunction with potential natural disasters, could alter tourism and how travelling is perceived. These consequences could affect the number of services needed, or increase the need for information of travellers, both affecting Finland Abroad.

There are no competitors for the services offered by the Ministry and its missions. This is because authoritative services, such as receiving a new passport while abroad, cannot be obtained through other parties. While a passport can be applied through the Finnish Police website while abroad in certain cases, it will not be delivered abroad. Only certain Finnish missions can admit a new passport to a Finn abroad. (Ulkoministeriö 2019e.) Unlike the services, information related to travelling and other countries can be obtained from various websites. Such websites could be considered competitors for the informative aspect of Finland Abroad. Sometimes, travellers use travel agencies to find information on their destination and book a package tour. In such cases they might turn to their agency for recommendations and help. Thus, travel-related websites and services can be considered competitors to information related to travelling and destinations.

SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis listing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats is derived from the findings of internal and external analyses described above. Both Finland Abroad as a website and the communication aspect are considered, in addition to remarks on the position of the Ministry and the missions.

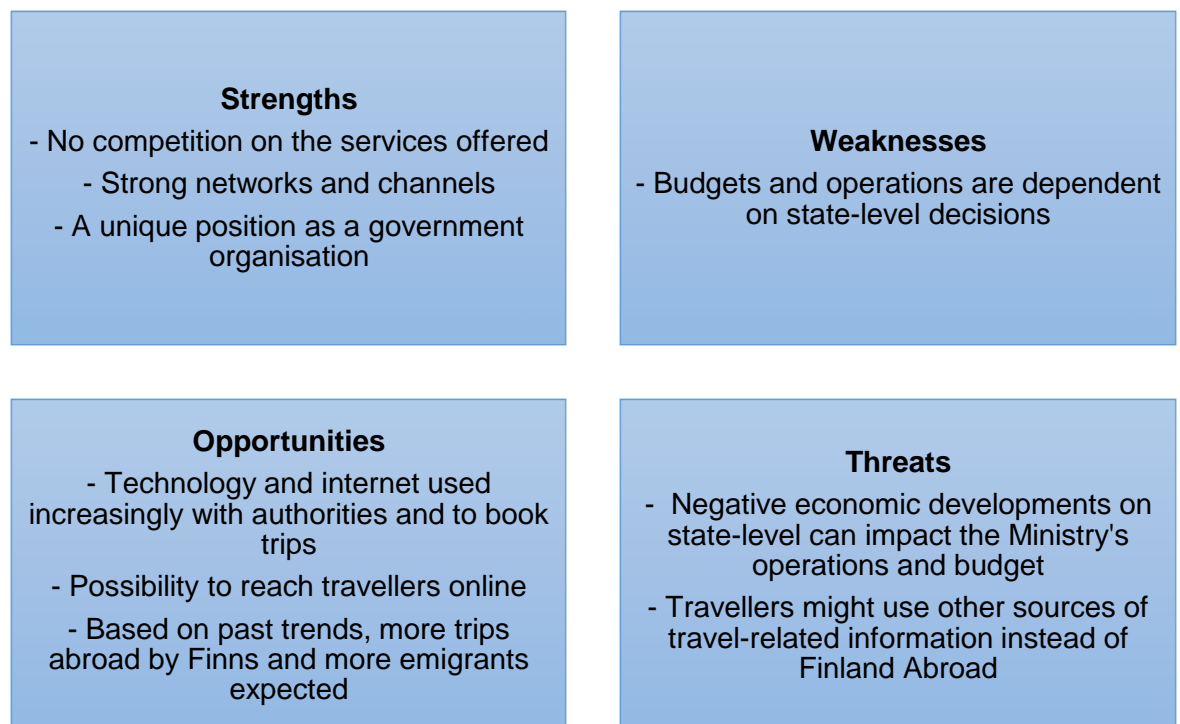


Figure 1. SWOT- analysis in the context of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Finland Abroad

This SWOT analysis concludes that travelling and moving abroad has been increasing in popularity and could thus be expected to grow in the future. The role of internet in travel planning is strengthening, as is the role of it in government services and communicating with citizens. Considering Finland Abroad, these conditions are favourable. However, the operations and budgets of the Ministry are dependent on state-level decisions, which might be a weakness when executing plans, for example communication plans. On the other hand, being a government organisation means having a unique, trusted position. Considering Finland Abroad, there are potential competitors in terms of information for travellers, such as travel blogs and websites. There are no competitors for the services offered.

2 The Marketing Concept for Finland Abroad

The purpose of the marketing concept is to offer a framework for marketing communication of Finland Abroad website. While it outlines the main ideas for marketing the website, it can be flexibly used to plan future campaigns.

2.1 Brand Promise

The brand promise communicates the value of Finland Abroad to target audiences and its users by clarifying the purpose of the website.

The brand promise of Finland Abroad website: to be a reliable, up-to-date, and interesting platform for travellers, expatriates, and companies, who are looking for information on authoritative services to Finns abroad. Finland Abroad helps users prepare for travelling and for being informed about Finland's representation abroad. Finland Abroad combines all the information and materials produced by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and the missions under one platform.

2.2 Target Audiences

In this plan, both internal and external target audiences are considered. Internal audiences refer to the employees of the Ministry and the missions. External target audiences are defined by their context and behavioural factors. This is because the services offered by the Ministry and its missions are such that they are tied to specific contexts and situations, rather than demographics. Although this communication plan focuses primarily on the external target audiences, internal target audiences and channels to reach them are defined. In order to enable better maintenance and the distribution of information to the external channels, it is necessary to reach and inform the internal audiences effectively.

Internal target audiences refer to the employees of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Finnish missions abroad. Due to its nature, this target audience is reached by different channels compared to the external audiences and is easier to identify and target than the external target audiences.

The internal target audiences are the following:

- Employees in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs
- Employees in the Finnish missions abroad.

External target audiences consist of the users of the website. This communication plan is designed to target the Finnish audience. The goal is to target Finnish citizens who might need the services, as well as Finnish companies who might be interested in exporting or expanding abroad.

To target the right Finns, segmentation is based on context and behaviour, rather than demographics. As stated in the objectives, the aim is to reach Finns who are:

- Planning a trip abroad
- Faced with an emergency or a crisis while travelling
- Living abroad and need services from authorities
- Interested to know about the Finnish missions abroad
- Interested to find information about certain countries produced by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and missions
- Interested in exporting/expanding their company abroad.

The segmentation is based on behaviour and context because they are the most relevant considering Finland Abroad. Based on the objectives, the following segments can be drawn:

- **Travellers:** those who travel alone or with family and friends, excluding travelling through travel agencies
- **Planners:** those who are planning to travel and want to understand the country they are traveling to
- **Expatriates:** Finns living abroad
- **Companies:** Finnish companies that are seeking to expand abroad, or export.

Although *travellers* and *planners* are likely to overlap, the distinction is made because their situations are assumed different. *Planners* are those at home, planning ahead and finding information, and the *travellers* those who are already on their journey, travelling. While *travellers* can certainly need information, the need for their information can arise from unexpected situations and are more likely to be more urgent than those of *planners*, who are only at the planning stage.

2.3 Communication Channels

There are two types of communication channels: those to reach the internal audiences, and those to reach the external audiences. The following lists both types of channels.

Channels to Reach Internal Target Audiences

The employees of the Ministry and employees in missions are most effectively reached by the following channels:

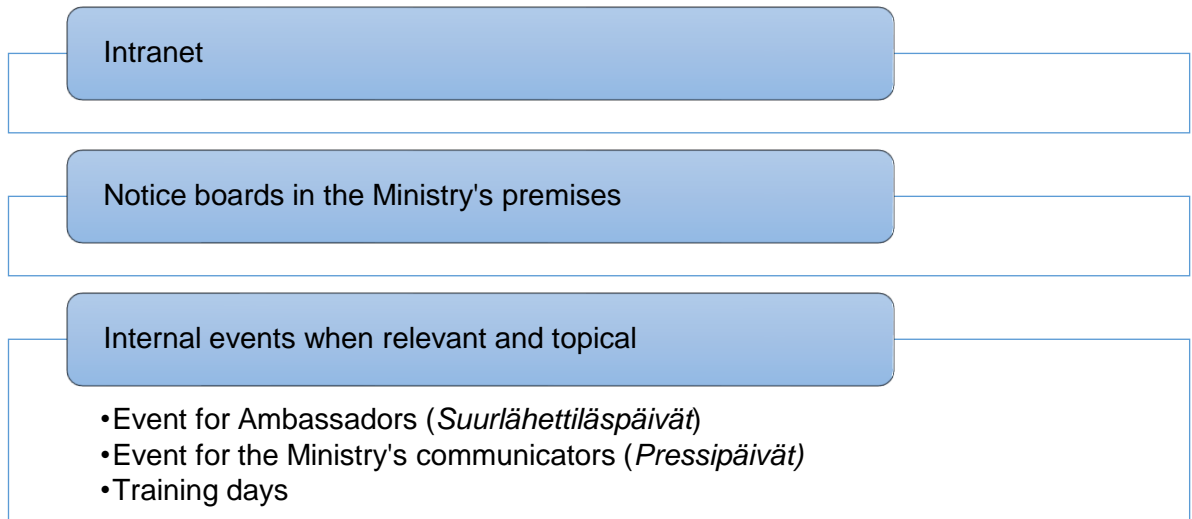


Figure 2. Channels to reach internal target audiences

These are the ideal channels for reaching the internal audience because notice boards and intranet are channels which employees can be assumed to use regularly for all necessary communication within any workplace. Internal events are convenient ways to inform internal channels where relevant. In addition to these channels, word-of-mouth is likely to occur among employees, raising awareness of relevant subjects concerning the website among the Ministry's employees. Moreover, although not listed here, employees following social media and other channels will see the communication directed to external audiences.

Channels to Reach External Target Audiences

The channels below are the primary channels for reaching the context-defined, external target audiences: travellers, planners, expatriates, and companies. These channels are all own channels, which is why they can be flexibly used in communication about Finland Abroad.

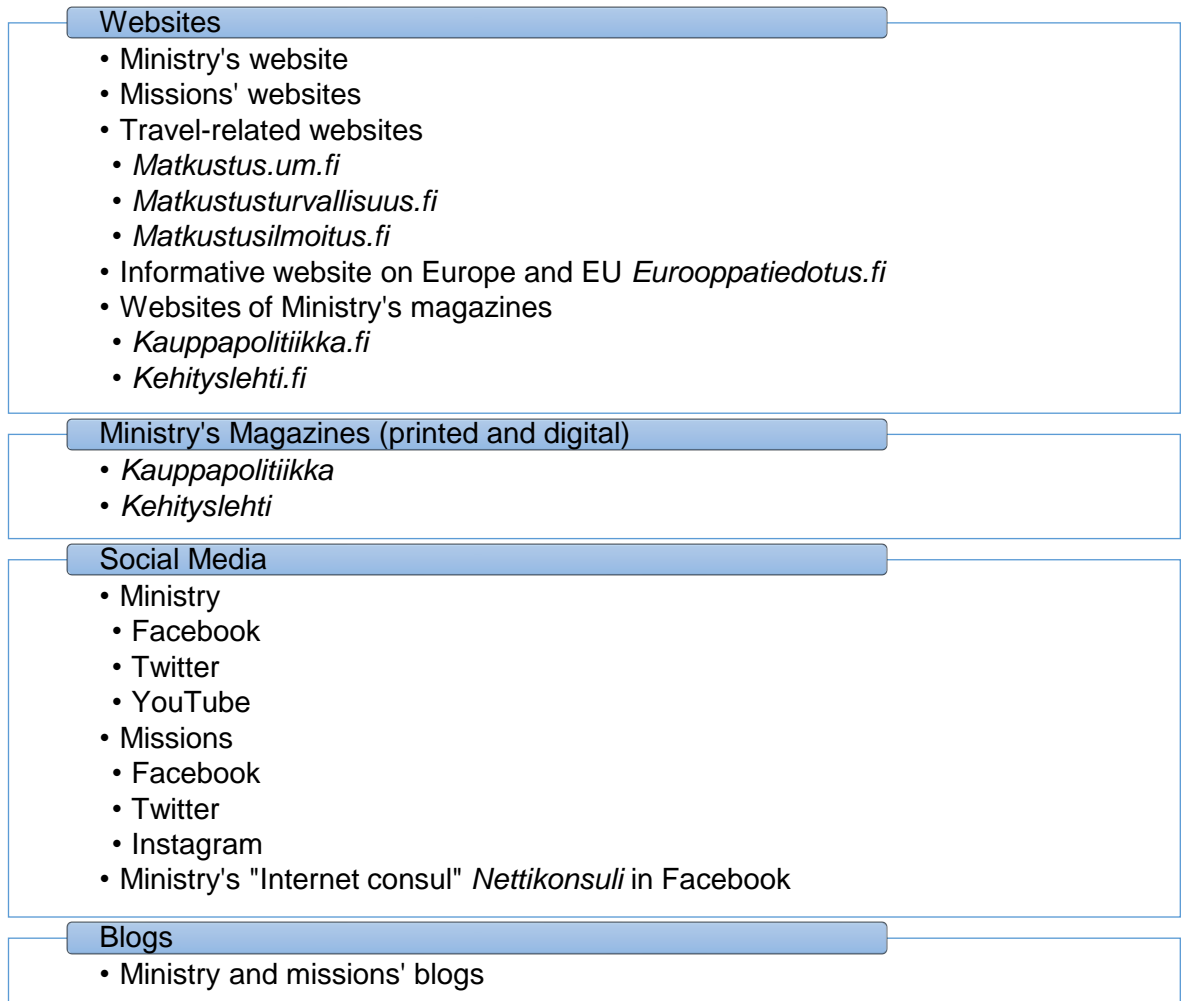


Figure 3. Channels to reach external target audiences

In addition to the channels listed above, creating a Facebook page for Finland Abroad should be considered. This would be beneficial because having its own Facebook page would enhance the brand of Finland Abroad. Moreover, according to the questionnaire results, the second most preferred communication channel for authorities is Facebook. The importance of Facebook as a communication channel suggests that dedicating a separate Facebook page for Finland Abroad is worth considering. It would help users engage with the brand and thus enhance the brand identity of Finland Abroad. On the other hand, if an additional Facebook page is created, it should be updated often enough to stay relevant. If there are no resources to keep updating the Facebook page for Finland Abroad, it is not feasible to create one.

Social media was the third most popular source of information when planning a trip abroad among questionnaire respondents. This suggests that emphasising social media channels in marketing is a viable idea. However, it is recommended to use various channels because according to the questionnaire results, younger respondents tended to use social media more than older respondents when planning a trip abroad.

2.4 Strategies and Tools

The following are the main strategies and tools that are used to reach the context-related, external target audiences.

PR, public relations refers to all the activities with press, such as press meetings and press releases. This strategy serves the informative communication aspect, integral to the functions of a government organisation.

Advertising involves for example banners in websites and other advertisements in social media, websites, and on print. Campaigns and relevant times of the year are times when advertising can be utilised to enhance the communication of Finland Abroad.

Social media marketing is an integral part of modern-day communication. This strategy offers interactivity with audiences and is cost-efficient, which is why it should be considered as one of the major strategies. Both paid and owned content can be used. Paid marketing helps reach audiences faster and often, more precisely. Facebook paid advertising can be used to target the right people specifically and is cost-effective.

Content marketing is actualised by the content in Finland Abroad created by the Ministry and the missions. Interesting content can add value to the users and enhance brand image. Articles, videos and other interesting content related to the topic are examples of interesting and valuable content. Content can help users find the website through key words in search engines, which is why SEO is a related concept.

SEO, search engine optimisation, is a strategy that helps people find the site by supporting inbound marketing and visibility in search engines. Using the right keywords and having genuine links leading to the website are ways to optimise the website's search engine visibility.

Branding in the case of Finland Abroad is based on reliability. One of the objectives of the plan is for the website be perceived as a reliable, authoritative service produced by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Finland's missions. Using images, text, and appropriate voice and tone contribute to building a credible brand for Finland Abroad. A cohesive brand image is achieved through consistency in messaging.

Collaborating with travel-related companies can be useful during campaigns but is an interesting opportunity in general. Relevant options include websites and portals related to travelling, for example blogs and travel websites.

According to the questionnaire results, the two most popular online sources for information on services offered to Finns abroad were search engines and websites of the Ministry and the missions. These suggest that SEO marketing is of high importance. For this reason, it is important that SEO is executed properly. The third most popular source was social media channels. Thus, a strong focus on SEO, website performance and social media presence should be ensured when implementing the plan.

2.5 Tactics and Implementation

Tactics are more specific and explain how the strategies are put into action. The tactics are aimed at reaching the right people, the external audiences, in a way that would help them find Finland Abroad and understand its purpose. The tactics are grouped according to strategies they aim to actualise, except for a category of “other” tactics.

PR

- Press releases and news on the Ministry’s website relating to Finland Abroad website
- Being present in relevant fairs and events

Advertising

- Using targeted marketing in Facebook: targeting based on the location (e.g. airport, harbour areas) to reach those who are already on their journey
- Advertisements and banners in own printed and digital magazines, especially before and during travel seasons
- Paid advertisements online in relevant websites, especially before and during travel seasons

Social Media

- The tactics considering social media and Facebook can be used whether Finland Abroad will have its own Facebook page or not: they can be employed using the Ministry and the missions’ own social media accounts, or that of Finland Abroad.
- Using hashtags in Twitter: *#suomiulkomailla*, *#finlandabroad*, *#finlandutomlands*
- In Twitter, engaging followers by asking followers questions related to travelling, using the hashtag *#finlandabroad*
- Sharing trend reports about travelling, for example: “The most popular travel destinations among Finns” to promote Finland Abroad and safe travelling
- FAQ about Finland Abroad, such as “what can users find on the website and what help can they get when abroad?” This helps users understand the purpose of the website easily

- Comments and testimonials from people who have used the services of the Ministry – this would make the services more concrete in the eyes of users and give concrete examples of situations when they can contact the consul services
- Making a “guide to safe travelling” including information on how to use the Finland Abroad website. This can be shared in multiple social media accounts and during travel seasons

Content Marketing

- Making a short, informative video about the website and its contents, in a similar manner as the video made about the Ministry and its missions and functions. This video could be shared in multiple channels and reused in marketing, making it a cost-effective investment.
- Making an infographic on the Finland Abroad website – a visual way to show how to use the website and when it can be helpful
- Happens when the Ministry and the missions publish their content in their websites and in Finland Abroad portal. The content can be shared through social media accounts for people to find them
- The Ministry’s bloggers could be asked to write their personal experiences abroad and how they might have needed help or services from the Ministry – and at the same time, mentioning how Finland Abroad is the website to search for help
- A series “Finland Abroad” or “Finns Abroad” – presenting and interviewing employees in consul services, what their job is like and how they help Finland while abroad. This could be used in the Ministry’s podcast, YouTube account, and made into web articles that could be shared in social media accounts and used with the hashtag *#finlandabroad*.
- The Ministry’s bloggers could present some cases on companies who are internationalising or tell how they are interacting with companies abroad. With such posts, there could be a mention about Finland Abroad and how companies can find information and services there.
- The questionnaire results suggest that the types of content perceived as the most important are those related to safety. Knowledge on how to prepare for and act in crisis situations and knowledge on Finland’s authoritative services abroad were the most important content types to the respondents. Hence, content related to travel safety is likely to be the most interesting type of content to website users.

SEO

- Using both single keywords and long tail, more specific key words
- Websites of the Ministry to have links to Finland Abroad, especially the websites related to travelling (*matkustusturvallisuus*, *matkustus* and *matkustusilmoitus*)
- If possible, asking partners to link Finland Abroad to their website or blog posts that are related to Finland Abroad
- In general, simply continuing to produce quality content and linking Finland Abroad where relevant. Quantity does not replace quality in SEO.
- Utilising the questionnaire results: SEO can be improved by utilising the search words the respondents were likely to use when searching for information on services to Finns abroad

Branding

- Branding is actualised through all the consistent communication actions taken
- Using the hashtag *#finlandabroad* and the name Finland Abroad enhance brand image and recognition
- Emphasising that Finland Abroad is administered by the Ministry and the missions can advance a reliable brand image of the website

Collaborating

- Collaborating is a viable option when building campaigns and increasing communication efforts during travel seasons. Alternatively, buying advertisement space in travel-related media is another option to reach travellers. Potential partners for collaborative campaigns or advertisement space include:
 - *Tripsteri*, a web-based travel guide
 - *Rantapallo*, a travel-related website with articles and blogs
 - *Pallontallaajat*, a travel website with blogs and a discussion forum
 - *Matkabloggajat*, a portal for travel blogs
 - *Reilun matkailun yhdistys*, an association for fair travelling

According to the questionnaire results, the most popular sources of information when planning a trip abroad were travel booking websites. Thus, hotel booking websites and websites of airlines are also prospective partners for campaigns.

Other

- Using different types of media: paid, earned, and owned. Earned is important since it is organic but paid can enhance visibility and can be targeted.
- Using multiple communication channels to ensure the reach is as broad as possible, especially before and during travel seasons.
- Finland Abroad portal and country-specific pages in the website: the Finland Abroad portal could be the focus of the Ministry's communication, whereas missions could focus on their country-/mission-specific site in the portal when marketing Finland Abroad
- After obtaining a visa, a person could be sent information about Finland Abroad website by SMS. Similarly, after a person has made a travel notification, they could be sent information about Finland Abroad via SMS or WhatsApp. According to the questionnaire results, a little over 26% of the respondents would like authorities to communicate via SMS, and a little over 23% would like authorities to communicate in WhatsApp. These were not the most popular communication channels for authorities in the results, but SMS and WhatsApp could be tested in said contexts.
- Internal audiences informed in intranet.

2.6 Annual Plan

These are annual events and phenomena that are relevant to the context and purpose of Finland Abroad. This annual plan can be flexibly used to plan promotion of Finland Abroad in events and on relevant occasions. The figure below considers the year and relevant annual events from the perspective of Finland Abroad. Thus, not all months or events are considered, only those with relevance to Finland Abroad.

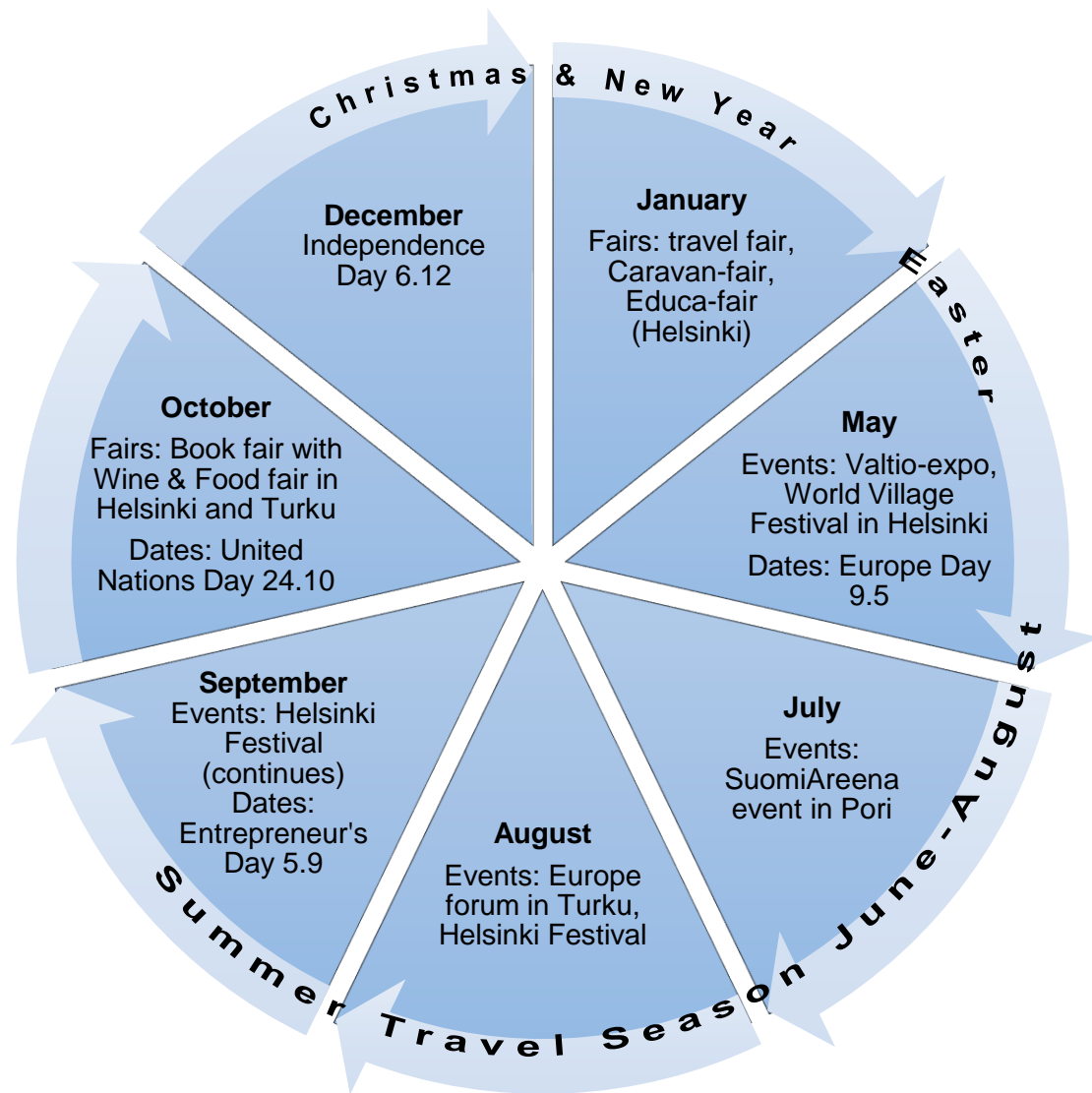


Figure 4. Annual Seasons and Events Relevant for Finland Abroad

Additional remarks concerning the annual plan:

- Summer: June, July, and August are the most popular travel seasons among Finns (Tilastokeskus 2019,18).
- Other holidays, such as Christmas, New Year, and Easter are potential travel seasons because there can be several days of holidays
- The dates for Finland's Independence Day, Europe Day, and United Nations Day are all related to Finland and Finland's representation abroad. These fit the theme of Finland Abroad and can be used in communication.
- The day celebrating Entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship, Entrepreneur's Day, can be used when communicating about the services to companies interested in internationalising their business
- Some of the events and fairs are related to travelling, and some to other leisure activities. Fairs can have thousands or even tens of thousands of visitors, meaning it is a great way to reach people interested in travelling. According to the questionnaire results, about one fifth of the respondents marked travel-related events, such

as fairs, preferred communication channels for authorities. Thus, fairs and events present a possibility to reach target audiences in a relevant context.

- Internal target audiences, namely the employees, can be encouraged to share Finland Abroad in their social media when travelling seasons are near
- The employees can be informed about changes or news relating to Finland Abroad during internal events
- Other ministries could remind their followers in social media to remember Finland Abroad when the holiday seasons are nearing

Social media post ideas for travel seasons and relevant dates and events

- Increasing paid advertising in Facebook if possible, clearly targeting those who are planning to travel or are travelling (for example based on location at an airport)
- Social media posts during travel seasons, for example related to:
 - o Related to travelling and travel planning
 - o Safety reports
 - o Passport issues
 - o Unexpected situations, crises, and how to prepare for them
 - o Trends – what are the most popular destinations and what to remember when travelling there
- Dates: posts related to the theme (e.g. United Nations Day and how Finland is represented in the UN)
- Events: Mentioning the presence at fairs and events in social media

2.7 Measurement

Measurement is useful in assessing and improving communication. Metrics will give useful insight on the performance of the website and the effectiveness of its communication. In addition, metrics can reveal issues that should be solved and point out areas that need improvement. The following metrics measure both the performance of the website and its communication.

- **Website speed.** This is significant for the user experience. Both desktop and mobile should be tested.
- **Traffic.** This refers to the number of people that visit the website. In addition to understanding how many visitors the website has, traffic metrics can reveal other interesting and useful information. Traffic can also tell what the different channels are that visitors come from (e.g. Google search, social media), and what sources or channels bring the most traffic. This is useful when planning marketing communication.
- **Engagement.** It might be useful to test what are people doing on the website once they are there, and if there are any points where many visitors close the website. These can help determine if the visitors find what they are looking for, or if they get frustrated at certain points and leave the website.
- **Demographics.** It might be interesting to see what the largest geographical areas where the visitors come from are, and what their profiles are like. When using targeted campaigns, this information is relevant for assessing the performance of a campaign.
- **SEO.** Although many of the other metrics listed here contribute to SEO, one way to measure this aspect is by measuring search visibility, in other words, how well the website domain is ranked in search engines.

- **Social Media.** This is especially relevant if Finland Abroad has its own Facebook page. Social listening tools can show what people are saying about Finland Abroad in social media. This information could be further used to analyse how the brand of Finland Abroad is perceived.
- **Opinions of the users of the website.** A questionnaire on the website can be used to ask visitors how they perceive the website and if they found what they were looking for. Questionnaires could also be useful in asking people whether they are familiar with Finland Abroad and if they recognise its purpose.

3 Launch Campaign

The purpose of this launch campaign is to introduce the website and reach a wide audience in Finland. Thus, the launch campaign focuses on reaching a larger audience than the concept presented earlier. For this reason, the channels, strategies and tactics differ somewhat from the concept.

The campaign consists of different strategies and tactics that support the marketing concept. The campaign is targeted at Finns in Finland on a wide spectrum: not only those who are in the process of planning their travels. Thus, the target audience are Finns and Finnish companies in general. However, some of the tactics are more targeted at travelers, for example advertisements in travel magazines. The goal is to inform people about the new website and educate them on its content and purpose.

The launch plan includes the following strategies: PR, social media, paid social media, own media, and paid media and advertising. In addition, internal communication is considered in the beginning to inform the internal target audiences. The biggest difference compared to the concept is the inclusion of paid media and advertising. PR, own media and social media are channels to inform audiences about the website, whereas paid media and advertising promote launch campaign visibility. Visibility is important in the launch phase to get new visitors and inform audiences about the new website. For this reason, paid media and advertising are utilised in the launch plan.

Planned duration for the launch campaign is three weeks. The strategies and tactics are partially repeated because every week includes each of their planned strategies and tactics. The tactics are organised based on strategies. Detailed dates and times are not given since the exact time of the campaign is not known at the moment of writing. The plan can be used flexibly, whenever the launch campaign begins.

3.1 Campaign and Schedule

The launch campaign is planned for three weeks. The schedule can be found in Appendix 1. Below, the launch plan is described in more detail.

Additional remarks concerning the launch plan:

- PR and promotion refer to all the press coverage that can be earned during the campaign. It is scheduled in the beginning, but in reality might happen later in the campaign or even outside the campaign frames.

- The purpose of the contest is to engage people and familiarise them with the website and its contents. It is planned to last for the entire three weeks. Along the campaign, it is recommended to post reminders to social media about the contest, to gain more participants.
- Social media posts introduce the new website and its benefits to users. In addition, relevant topics, such as travelling trends, can be used in social media marketing with the Finland Abroad theme. This is to add more variety and context to social media posts.
- If possible, an infographic and a video about Finland Abroad could be prepared. These would add variety to Finland Abroad, and enhance the brand.
- The general posts about Finland Abroad and the country-specific posts in social media take into account the portal- as well as the country-specific levels of the website.
- In case a separate Facebook page will be created for Finland Abroad, any of the social media tactics used in the plan can be used in a similar manner in the new Facebook page.
- Sharing the link of the website in different social media channels drives traffic from the beginning of the campaign. For this reason, those missions that have an Instagram account could link the Finland Abroad website to their Instagram bio for the time of the campaign.
- The paid advertisements enhance the campaign and bring visibility. For this reason, channels such as screens in metro are chosen: they have a wide audience and a great visibility. The metro advertisements can promote the contest, encouraging audiences to go to the website as they see the advertisement.
- The use of info screens is supported by the questionnaire results: info screens at ports and airports were the third most popular choice when respondents were asked their preferred communication channel for authorities.
- The magazines and the websites are specified in the budget-section.

3.2 Budget

The budget for the launch campaign considers both paid social media and paid media and advertising. Paid media and advertising include travel magazines, travel blogs and websites, as well as digital screens. Materials and work hours are not considered in this budget.

Table 1. Budget for launch campaign

Type	Media	Budget	% of Total	Comment
Paid Social Media	Facebook Paid	€ 315.00	2%	Distributed over 3 weeks
Travel Magazines	Mondo	€ 2,670.00	15%	Size of ad: 1/4, 4 weeks
	Matkaopas	€ 2,235.00	12%	Size of ad: 1/4, 4 weeks
Travel Blogs and Websites	Tripsteri	€ 440.00	2%	Distributed over 3 weeks
	Rantapallo	€ 1,240.00	7%	Distributed over 3 weeks
Digital Screens	JCDecaux screens in metros	€ 11,100.00	62%	Distributed over 3 weeks; Mon, Wed, Fri & Sat

Total budget:	€	18,000
----------------------	----------	---------------

Additional remarks on the budget:

- VAT 24% is considered in the budgeted amounts

- Where the types of adverts are specific, the amounts are estimated slightly higher to arrive at an even number
- Facebook paid marketing only makes up 2% of the budget because Facebook marketing is more cost-efficient compared to other types of advertisements.
- Travel magazines *Mundo* and *Matkaopas* both have a budget for ¼ page -sized advertisement (A-lehdet 2019, Sanoma Lifestyle 2019, 74).
- Travel websites and blogs
 - o *Tripsteri*: a website with travel guides. Many options for advertisements ranging between 8-35€/cost per thousand impressions (Tripsteri 2019).
 - o *Rantapallo*: "Finland's most popular travelling media", different sizes and possibilities for advertisements (Skuuppi 2019).
- Digital Screens in metros in Helsinki and Espoo area. Digital screens are a way to reach masses of people and get visibility easily. The budgeted amount is calculated for four days (Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday) for three consecutive weeks, using July as an example month. This translates to almost 1,4 million impressions. (JCDecaux 2019.)

The budget was allocated based on two principles: trying to reach travellers and trying to reach the general public as broadly as possible, as cost-efficiently as possible. The travel magazines, *Mundo* and *Matkaopas*, are the most visible travel magazines in Finland. An advertisement in these magazines lasts for four weeks because they are issued once a month. For these reasons, the two magazines were thought to be a good choice. As for travel websites and blogs, *Rantapallo* and *Tripsteri* were chosen. *Rantapallo* is possibly the most known travel blog portal in Finland. *Tripsteri* is probably less known for the time being but is still a relevant medium. Both are focused on travelling and are online, which is why these were chosen for the digital marketing. Digital screens in metro were chosen for a wider audience. Although this is a very expensive mean of advertising, it has a great potential for increasing traffic in the website, as the number of impressions would be very high.

3.3 Measurement

To measure the launch campaign success, the metrics listed earlier in the concept are relevant. In addition to them, the following will give insight on how the marketing budget spent is translated to results:

- **The number of visitors** in the website during the campaign. This is essential for understanding how successful the overall communication campaign was in improving visibility.
- **Click-through rate** shows how many of those who saw a digital advertisement ended up clicking it and going to the website. Understanding how many visitors came through an advertisement is useful because it shows if the advertisements have been worth the investment or not. Together with traffic sources, it helps estimating how the non-digital advertisements performed during the campaign.

- **Earned media and PR.** Tracking how much earned media and PR the website received during the campaign contributes to understanding the overall success of the campaign.

Measuring the launch campaign performance of Finland Abroad is mostly concerned with visibility and traffic. This is because the number of people needing the services is not expected to rise because of the campaign. The number of people who need the services is dependent on other factors, such as travelling trends and crises. Thus, the campaign performance is best measured in website traffic and the impact of paid media on the number of visitors.

4 Risks and Concluding Notes

This section outlines the risks of this plan and its implementation. Concluding notes are given to summarise the plan.

The following can be considered as risks in this plan and its implementation:

- The author of this plan is external to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs: therefore, it is possible that not being part of the organisation has led to some ideas and suggestions that would not be possible or appropriate to implement.
- The situational analysis relies on external sources and are interpreted by the author, who is not an employee of the Ministry. Thus, it is possible that incorrect interpretations of the Ministry's internal or external environments are made, although caution has been exercised.
- Finland Abroad website is a completely new concept and has not been extensively marketed prior to creating this plan. For this reason, analysing the current situation of marketing and communication has not been possible. Thus, the suggestions and recommendations rest on assumptions that these would be the best practices, without having been able to test them in practice.
- The budget planned for the launch campaign is based on estimates and it does not consider materials or work hours. It is based on the author's best possible assessment, but it cannot be ensured that it would prove realistic for the department for communications to implement.
- Some people might have ad-blockers that block the internet advertisements. Therefore, although potentially cost-efficient, internet advertising might be less efficient than anticipated.

This chapter concludes the communication plan for the Finland Abroad website. The plan has outlined the elements commonly found in a communication plan and considered how they could be used to best plan the communication of Finland Abroad. The author has tried to construct a relevant, useful communication plan using theoretical basis and a research questionnaire conducted in the context of this project.

References

A-lehdet 2019. Hinnasto ja myyntitiedot. URL: <https://www.a-lehdet.fi/yrityksille/hinnasto-ja-myyntiehtot>. Accessed: 25 April 2019.

Finlex 2005. Valtioneuvoston asetus ulkoministeriöstä. URL: <https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2005/20051171>. Accessed: 22 April 2019.

Ilmasto-opas 2019a. Euroopan matkailukohteet sekä kärsivät että hyötyvät ilmastomuutoksesta. URL: <https://ilmasto-opas.fi/en/ilmastonmuutos/vaikutukset/-/artikkeli/fi/bdb84664-3ae8-4917-807d-90302ae5807b/matkailu-euroopassa.html>. Accessed: 6 April 2019.

Ilmasto-opas 2019b. Matkailu ja virkistys - hillintä. URL: <https://ilmasto-opas.fi/fi/kunnat/hillinta-ja-sopeutuminen/-/artikkeli/07c5a38e-9d42-4585-b79a-a8bfa0b595ba/hillinta.html>. Accessed: 6 April 2019.

JCDecaux 2019. Digital Planner. URL: <https://digi.jcdecaux.fi/>. Accessed: 25 April 2019.

Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2019a. Responsibilities of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. URL: <https://um.fi/responsibilities>. Accessed: 21 February 2019.

Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2019b. Finnish missions abroad. URL: <https://um.fi/missions>. Accessed: 21 February 2019.

Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2019c. Foreign Service's operating and financial planning. URL: <https://um.fi/ministry-s-finances>. Accessed: 21 February 2019.

Prime Minister's Office Publications 2016. Together, boldly and openly. Central Government Communications Guidelines. URL: <https://vnk.fi/en/provisions-and-instructions-on-government-communications>. Accessed: 22 April 2019.

Sanoma Lifestyle 2019. Mediahinnasto. URL: <https://media.sanoma.fi/sites/default/files/2019-03/Sanoma%20mediahinnasto%202019%20%20Lifestyle.pdf>. Accessed: 25 April 2019.

Skuuppi 2019. Iltalehti, Kotikokki, Telkku, Rantapallo digi hinnat alkaen 1.11.2017 (päivitetty 22.2.2019). URL: <http://skuuppi.iltalehti.fi/hinnat.html>. Accessed: 25 April 2019.

Team Finland 2019. About Team Finland. URL: <https://www.team-finland.fi/en/about-team-finland/>. Accessed: 26 May 2019.

Tilastokeskus 2018. Nettomaahanmuutto edellisvuotta pienempää vuonna 2017. URL: https://www.stat.fi/til/muutl/2017/muutl_2017_2018-10-30_tie_001_fi.html. Accessed: 6 April 2019.

Tilastokeskus 2019. Suomalaisten matkailu 2018. URL: https://www.stat.fi/til/smat/2018/smat_2018_2019-03-28_fi.pdf. Accessed: 6 April 2019.

Tripsteri 2019. Mediakortti. URL: <https://www.tripsteri.fi/mediakortti/>. Accessed: 25 April 2019.

Ulkoministeriö 2018. Ennätysmäärä matkustusilmoituksia ulkoministeriölle viime vuonna. URL: https://um.fi/ajankohtaista/-/asset_publisher/gc654PySnjTX/content/ennatysmaara-matkustusilmoituksia-ulkoministeriolle-viime-vuonna. Accessed: 21 February 2019.

Ulkoministeriö 2019a. Ulkoministeriö verkossa. URL: <https://um.fi/ulkoministerio-verkossa>. Accessed: 5 April 2019.

Ulkoministeriö 2019b. Edustustot verkossa. URL: <https://um.fi/edustustot-verkossa>. Accessed: 22 April 2019.

Ulkoministeriö 2019c. Ulkoministeriön blogit. URL: <https://blogit.ulkoministerio.fi/>. Accessed: 22 April 2019.

Ulkoministeriö 2019d. Toimintaa ohjaavat lait ja asetukset. URL: <https://um.fi/toimintaa-ohjaavat-lait-ja-asetukset>. Accessed: 6 April 2019.

Ulkoministeriö 2019e. Passin ja henkilökortin hakeminen ulkomailla. URL: <https://um.fi/passin-hakeminen-ulkomailla>. Accessed: 7 April 2019.

United Nations 2018. United Nations E-Government Survey 2018. Gearing E-Government to Support Transformation Towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies. URL: https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/Portals/egovkb/Documents/un/2018-Survey/E-Government%20Survey%202018_FINAL%20for%20web.pdf. Accessed: 6 April 2019.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Finland Abroad Launch Campaign Schedule

Time	Strategy	Tactic	Channels	Owned/Earned/Paid
Week 1	Internal Communication	Information about the new website and its launch campaign	Intranet	Owned
		Information about the new website and its launch campaign	Notice boards at the Ministry's premises	Owned
	PR	Press Release	The Ministry's webpage	Owned
		Promoting the website and the contest	Other media (Yle, other relevant media)	Earned
	Social Media	A contest in social media: marketing starts and contest informed about	Ministry and missions' social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)	Owned
		Reminders about the contest	Ministry and missions' social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)	Owned
		Posts about the Finland Abroad -portal and its purpose	Ministry's Facebook & Twitter	Owned
		Posts about the country-specific pages and their content in Finland Abroad	Missions' Facebook, Twitter & Instagram	Owned
		Posts about the new website and its purpose	Other Ministries' social media	Owned/Earned
		Embassies and other missions: those that have Instagram, linking the website to their bio for the campaign period	Missions' Instagram	Owned
		Posts about Finland Abroad for companies	Ministry and Team Finland's Facebook & Twitter	Owned
		Posts about Finland Abroad for companies	Team Finland's Facebook & Twitter	Owned
		Sharing an infographic about the website	Facebook, Twitter (Ministry and missions)	Owned
		Sharing video(s) about the website	Ministry and missions' YouTube, Facebook, Twitter	Owned
	Paid Social Media	Paid Facebook marketing	Ministry and missions' Facebook	Paid
	Own media	Emails to newsletter subscribers	Kaupapolitiikka newsletter e-mail list & any other possible e-mail list	Owned
		Advertisements and/or articles	Kaupapolitiikka & Kehityslähti (both printed & digital version)	Owned
		Advertisements and/or articles	Kaupapolitiikka & Kehityslähti Online	Owned
		Brochures about Finland Abroad	Distributing in public places (for example library Oodi)	Owned/Earned
	Paid Media & Advertising	Advertisements	Travel magazines	Paid
		Advertisements	Travel blogs	Paid
		Advertisements	Travel websites	Paid
		Advertisements in screens	Screens in metro, trams	Paid

Week 2	Social Media	Reminders about the contest	Ministry and missions' Facebook, Twitter & Instagram	Owned
		Sharing content related to Finland Abroad in social media (e.g. statistics about travelling) + link to the website	Ministry and missions' social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)	Owned
		Posts about the country-specific pages and their content in Finland Abroad	Missions' Facebook, Twitter and Instagram	Owned
		Sharing information about how Finnish companies can internationalise and how Finland Abroad is related + link to the website	Ministry and missions' social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)	Owned
	Paid Social Media	Paid Facebook marketing	Ministry and missions' Facebook	Paid
	Paid Media & Advertising	Advertisements	Travel blogs	Paid
		Advertisements	Travel websites	Paid
		Advertisements in screens	Screens in metro, trams	Paid

Week 3	Social Media	Reminders about the contest	Ministry and missions' social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)	Owned
		Sharing content related to Finland Abroad in social media (e.g. statistics about travelling) + link to the website	Ministry and missions' Facebook and Twitter, also Instagram	Owned
		Posts about the country-specific pages and their content in Finland Abroad	Missions' Facebook, Twitter & Instagram	Owned
		Sharing information on how Finland Abroad is related to internationalisation of companies + link to the website	Ministry and missions' social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)	Owned
		At the end of the week, closing the competition	Ministry and missions' social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)	Owned
	Paid Social Media	Paid Facebook marketing	Ministry and missions' Facebook	Paid
	Paid Media & Advertising	Advertisements	Travel blogs	Paid
		Advertisements	Travel websites	Paid
		Advertisements in screens	Screens in metro, trams	Paid